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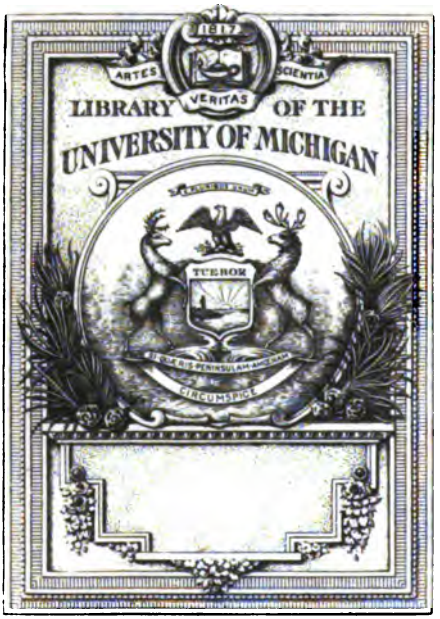
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OF

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN

DRAMAS, POEMS, TRANSLATIONS, SPEECHES,
UNFINISHED SKETCHES, AND ANA

EDITED BY F. STAINFORTH

A NEW IMPRESSION
WITH PORTRAIT AND MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR

LONDON
CHATTO & WINDUS
1913

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LIFE OF

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN.

IN few families can the heritage of genius be more easily traced than in that of the wit, orator, poet, and dramatist, RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN.

His grandfather, Dr. Thomas Sheridan, was educated by a relative, the deprived Bishop of Kilmore, at Trinity College, Dublin, where he distinguished himself in the classics. Having taken holy orders, he became one of the chaplains to the Lord-Lieutenant, and set up a school in Dublin, which for some time produced him nearly £1000 a year.

Naturally careless and extravagant, he indulged his inclinations for the pleasures of the table to such an excess that his duties were neglected, his pupils gradually diminished, and at length his once flourishing academy became worthless. After declining the mastership of the grammar-school at Armagh, his friend, Dean Swift, procured him a living in the south of Ireland, producing a moderate income.

At his installation, he imprudently preached a sermon on the 1st of August (the anniversary of the accession of the House of Hanover), from the text, "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." For this unhappy stroke of political wit, his name

was erased from the list of vice-regal chaplains, and he was forbidden the castle. He became master of the free-school at Cavan, which he soon sold for £400, and returned to Dublin, where he died on the 10th day of September, 1738, in great poverty. Many of his letters appear in Swift's Miscellanies; he also was the author of a prose translation of Persius, and he published a few sermons. Lord Cork and Orrery writes of him:—

"Dr. Sheridan, was a schoolmaster, and in many instances perfectly adapted to that station. He was deeply versed in the Greek and the Roman languages, and in their customs and antiquities. He had that kind of good nature which absence of mind, indolence of body, and carelessness of fortune produce; and although not over strict in his own conduct, yet he took care of the morality of his scholars, whom he sent to the University remarkably well grounded in all kinds of learning, and not ill instructed in the social duties of life.

"He was slovenly, indigent, and cheerful. He knew books much better than men, and he knew the value of money least of all. In this situation, and with this disposition, Swift fastened upon him as a prey with which he intended to regale himself whenever his appetite should prompt him."

His lordship then proceeds to treat on the unlucky sermon, and adds—

"This ill-starred, good-natured, improvident man returned to Dublin, unhinged from all favour at court, and even banished from the castle. But still he remained a punster, a quibbler, a fiddler, and a wit. Not a day passed without a rebus, an anagram, or a madrigal. His pen and his fiddle were continually in motion, and yet to little or no purpose."

Thomas Sheridan, the father of Richard Brinsley, was born at Quilca, in Ireland, in 1721. Dean Swift was his godfather. He was educated at Westminster School and Trinity College, where he graduated M.A. On the death of his father he was advised to undertake the education of youth; but, entertaining the highest opinion of oratory, he resolved upon the stage as

the school for diffusing a classical knowledge of the art which he considered divine. He made his first appearance at the Theatre Royal, Smock Alley, Dublin, in the character of Richard the Third, and as an actor obtained a reputation second only to Garrick himself. Unfortunately, he became manager of a Dublin theatre, and his affairs were soon embarrassed; so he quitted the stage for the more profitable employment of teaching elocution. He published some pieces on this subject, which gained him sound reputation; one of them, "A dedication to Lord Bute," procuring for the author a pension of £200 a year.

He afterwards became manager of Drury Lane, but soon retired from that position. His name will be handed down to posterity by his "Life and Writings of Dean Swift," and by his "Orthoepical Dictionary of the English Language," which appeared in 1788, and is still quoted as a standard work. He also published some minor works on educational subjects. He died at Margate in the sixty-seventh year of his age, on the 14th August, 1788, living to see his younger son famous, and the great master of that art which he so much admired. His wife was a very accomplished and amiable woman. Her novel, "Sidney Biddulph," could boast among its warm panegyrists Mr. Fox and Lord North; and in the "Tale of Nourjahad" she has employed the graces of Eastern fiction to inculcate a grave and important moral—putting on a fairy disguise, like her own Mandane, to deceive her readers into a taste for true happiness and virtue. Besides her two plays, "The Discovery" and "The Dupe"—the former of which Garrick pronounced to be "one of the best comedies he ever read"—she wrote a comedy also, called the "Trip to Bath," which was never either acted or published.

The second son of Mr. Thomas Sheridan was born in the month of September, 1751, at No. 12, Dorset Street, Dublin, and baptized in St. Mary's church, on the fourth of the following month, by the names of Richard Brinsley Butler, the first after his uncle, and the second and third after the Right Hon.

Brinsley Butler, Lord Lanesborough, governor of the county of Cavan, and a particular friend of the family.

At the age of seven years he was, with his elder brother, Charles Francis, placed under the tuition of Mr. Samuel Whyte, of Grafton Street, Dublin; but they remained little more than a year under his care.

From Mr. Whyte's school the boys were removed to England, where Mr. and Mrs. Sheridan had lately gone to reside, and in the year 1762 Richard was sent to Harrow—Charles being kept at home as a fitter subject for the instructions of his father, who, by one of those calculations of poor human foresight, which the deity called Eventus by the Romans takes such wanton pleasure in falsifying, considered his elder son as destined to be the brighter of the two brother stars. At Harrow, Richard contrived to win the affection, and even admiration, of the whole school, both masters and pupils, by the mere charm of his frank and genial manners, and by the occasional gleams of superior intellect, which broke through all the indolence and indifference of his character.

Harrow, at this time, possessed some peculiar advantages, of which a youth like Sheridan might have powerfully availed himself. At the head of the school was Dr. Robert Sumner, a man of fine talents, but unfortunately one of those who have passed away without leaving any trace behind, except in the admiring recollection of their contemporaries. At the same period, the distinguished scholar, Dr. Parr, who, to the massy erudition of a former age, joined all the free and enlightened intelligence of the present, was one of the under-masters of the school; and both he and Dr. Sumner endeavoured, by every method they could devise, to awaken in Sheridan a consciousness of those powers which, under all the disadvantages of indolence and carelessness, it was manifest to them that he possessed.

The following is an extract from a letter written by Dr. Parr, on the subject of Sheridan's youth :—

"Sumner and I saw in him vestiges of a superior intellect. His eye, his countenance, his general manner, were striking.

His answers to any common question were prompt and acute. We knew the esteem, and even admiration, which, somehow or other, all his schoolfellows felt for him. He was mischievous enough, but his pranks were accompanied by a sort of vivacity and cheerfulness which delighted Sumner and myself. I had much talk with him about his apple-loft, for the supply of which all the gardens in the neighbourhood were taxed, and some of the lower boys were employed to furnish it. I threatened, but without asperity, to trace the depredators, through his associates, up to their leader. He, with perfect good-humour, set me at defiance, and I never could bring the charge home to him. All boys and all masters were pleased with him. I often praised him as a lad of great talents—often exhorted him to use them well; but my exhortations were fruitless. I take for granted that his taste was silently improved, and that he knew well the little which he did know. He was removed from school too soon by his father, who was the intimate friend of Sumner, and whom I often met at his house. The father, you know, was a wrong-headed, whimsical man, and, perhaps, his scanty circumstances were one of the reasons which prevented him from sending Richard to the University. He must have been aware, as Sumner and I were, that Richard's mind was not cast in any ordinary mould.

"Let me assure you that Richard, when a boy, was by no means vicious. The sources of his infirmities were a scanty and precarious allowance from the father; the want of a regular plan for some profession; and, above all, the act of throwing him upon the town, when he ought to have been pursuing his studies at the University. He would have done little among mathematicians at Cambridge; he would have been a rake, or an idler, or a trifler, at Dublin; but I am inclined to think that at Oxford he would have become an excellent scholar."

During the greater part of Richard's stay at Harrow, his father had been compelled by the embarrassment of his affairs to reside with the remainder of the family in France, and it was at Blois, in the September of 1766, that Mrs. Sheridan died—

leaving behind her that best kind of fame, which results from a life of usefulness and purity, and which it requires not the aid of art or eloquence to blazon.

As a supplement to Dr. Parr's letter, I subjoin an extract from a letter, which Sheridan's eldest sister, Mrs. Lefanu, wrote a few months after his death, to Mrs. Sheridan, in consequence of a wish expressed by the latter that Mrs. Lefanu would communicate such particulars as she remembered of his early days. After giving an account of the residence of the family in France, she continues:—"We returned to England, when I may say I first became acquainted with my brother—for faint and imperfect were my recollections of him, as might be expected from my age. I saw him; and my childish attachment revived with double force. He was handsome, not merely in the eyes of a partial sister, but generally allowed to be so. His cheeks had the glow of health, his eyes—the finest in the world—the brilliancy of genius, and were soft as a tender and affectionate heart could render them. The same playful fancy, the same sterling and innoxious wit, that was shown afterwards in his writings, cheered and delighted the family circle. I admired—I almost adored him. I would most willingly have sacrificed my life for him, as I, in some measure, proved to him at Bath, where we resided for some time, and where events that you must have heard of engaged him in a duel. My father's displeasure threatened to involve me in the denunciations against him, for committing what he considered as a crime. Yet I risked everything, and in the event was made happy by obtaining forgiveness for my brother. * * * * You may perceive, dear sister, that very little indeed have I to say on a subject so near your heart, and near mine also. That for years I lost sight of a brother whom I loved with unabated affection—a love that neither absence nor neglect could chill—I always consider as a great misfortune."

On his leaving Harrow, where he continued till near his eighteenth year, he was brought home by his father, who, with the elder son, Charles, had lately returned from France, and

taken a house in London. Here the two brothers for some time received private tuition from Mr. Lewis Kerr, an Irish gentleman. However inattentive to his studies he may have been at Harrow, it appears that in poetry, which is usually the first exercise in which these young athletæ of intellect try their strength, he had already distinguished himself—and, in conjunction with his friend Nathaniel Halhed, had translated the seventh Idyl, and many of the lesser poems of Theocritus. This literary partnership was resumed soon after their departure from Harrow. In the year 1770, when Halhed was at Oxford, and Sheridan residing with his father at Bath, they entered into a correspondence (of which, unluckily, only Halhed's share remains), and, with all the hope and spirit of young adventurers, began and prosecuted a variety of works together, of which none but their translations of "Aristænetus" ever saw the light.

"Aristænetus" made its appearance in August, 1771, and although treated with much favour by the reviewers was a pecuniary failure.

It was about this time that Sheridan first met Miss Linley, the celebrated singer, generally known as the Maid of Bath. Her personal charms, her exquisite musical talents, and the full light of publicity which her profession threw upon both, naturally attracted round her a crowd of admirers, in whom the sympathy of a common pursuit soon kindled into rivalry, till she became at length an object of vanity as well as of love.

She had been at the early age of sixteen on the point of marriage with Mr. Long, an old gentleman of considerable fortune in Wiltshire, who proved the reality of his attachment to her in a way which few young lovers would be romantic enough to imitate. On her secretly representing to him that she never could be happy as his wife, he generously took upon himself the whole blame of breaking off the alliance, and even indemnified the father, who was proceeding to bring the transaction into court, by settling £3000 upon his daughter. Mr.

Sheridan, who owed to this liberal conduct not only the possession of the woman he loved, but the means of supporting her during the first years of their marriage, spoke invariably of Mr. Long, who lived to a very advanced age, with all the kindness and respect which such a disinterested character merited.

It was about the middle of the year 1770 that the Sheridans took up their residence in King's Mead Street, Bath, where an acquaintance commenced between them and Mr. Linley's family, which the kindred tastes of the young people soon ripened into intimacy. It was not to be expected—though parents, in general, are as blind to the first approach of these dangers, as they are rigid and unreasonable after they have happened — that such youthful poets and musicians should come together, without Love very soon making one of the party. Accordingly, the two brothers and their friend Halhed became deeply enamoured of Miss Linley.

In love, as in everything else, the power of a mind like Sheridan's must have made itself felt through all difficulties and obstacles. He was not long in winning the entire confidence and affections of the young Queen of Song, though the number and wealth of his rivals, the ambitious views of her father, and the temptations to which she was hourly exposed, kept his jealousies and fears perpetually on the watch.

But, to the honour of her sex, which is, in general, more disinterested than the other, it was found that neither rank nor wealth had influenced her heart in its election; and Halhed, who, like others, had estimated the strength of his rivals by their rent-rolls, discovered that his unpretending friend, Sheridan (whose advances in courtship and in knowledge seem to have been equally noiseless and triumphant), was the chosen favourite of her at whose feet so many fortunes lay.

To this period of Mr. Sheridan's life we are indebted for most of those elegant love-verses, which are so well known and so often quoted. The lines, "Uncouth is this moss-covered grotto of stone," he addressed to Miss Linley, after having offended her by one of those lectures upon decorum of

conduct, which jealous lovers so frequently inflict upon their mistresses—and the grotto, immortalized by their quarrel, is supposed to have been in Spring Gardens, then the fashionable place of resort in Bath.

Charles Sheridan, now one and twenty, the oldest and gravest of the party, finding his passion for Miss Linley increase every day, and conscious of the imprudence of yielding to it any further, wisely determined to fly from the struggle altogether. Having taken a solemn farewell of her in a letter, which his youngest sister delivered, he withdrew to a farm-house about seven or eight miles from Bath, little suspecting that he left his brother in full possession of that heart, of which he thus reluctantly and hopelessly raised the siege. Nor would this secret perhaps have been discovered for some time, had not another lover, of a less legitimate kind than either, by the alarming importunity of his courtship, made an explanation on all sides necessary.

Captain Mathews, a married man and a friend of Miss Linley's family, presuming upon the innocent familiarity which her youth and his own station permitted between them, had for some time not only rendered her remarkable by his indiscreet attentions in public, but had even persecuted her in private with those unlawful addresses and proposals, which a timid female will sometimes rather endure, than encounter that share of the shame which may be reflected upon herself by their disclosure. To the threat of self-destruction, often tried with effect in these cases, he is said to have added the still more unmanly menace of ruining her reputation, if he could not undermine her virtue. Terrified by his perseverance, and dreading the consequences of her father's temper if this violation of his confidence and hospitality were exposed to him, she at length confided her distresses to Richard Sheridan; who, having consulted with his sister, and, for the first time, disclosed to her the state of his heart with respect to Miss Linley, lost no time in expostulating with Mathews upon the cruelty, libertinism, and fruitlessness of his pursuit. Such a remon-

strance, however, was but little calculated to conciliate the forbearance of this professed man of gallantry.

In consequence of this persecution, and an increasing dislike to her profession, which made her shrink more and more from the gaze of the many, in proportion as she became devoted to the love of one, she adopted, early in 1772, the romantic resolution of flying secretly to France, and taking refuge in a convent—intending, at the same time, to indemnify her father, to whom she was bound till the age of twenty-one, by the surrender to him of part of the sum which Mr. Long had settled upon her. Sheridan, who, it is probable, had been the chief adviser of her flight, was, of course, not slow in offering to be the partner of it. His sister, whom he seems to have persuaded that his conduct in this affair arose solely from a wish to serve Miss Linley, as a friend, without any design or desire to take advantage of her elopement, as a lover, not only assisted them with money out of her little fund for house expenses, but gave them letters of introduction to a family with whom she had been acquainted at St. Quentin. On the evening appointed for their departure—while Mr. Linley, his eldest son, and Miss Maria Linley were engaged at a concert, from which Miss Linley herself had been, on a plea of illness, excused—she was conveyed by Sheridan in a sedan-chair from her father's house in the Crescent, to a post-chaise which waited for them on the London road, and in which she found a woman, whom her lover had hired, as a sort of protecting Minerva, to accompany them in their flight.

On their arrival in London, he introduced her to an old friend of his family (Mr. Ewart), as a rich heiress who had consented to elope with him to the Continent; in consequence of which the old gentleman not only accommodated the fugitives with a passage on board a ship, which he had ready to sail from the port of London to Dunkirk, but gave them letters of recommendation to his correspondents at that place, who with the same zeal and despatch facilitated their journey to Lisle.

On their leaving Dunkirk, as was natural to expect, the chivalrous and disinterested protector degenerated into a mere selfish lover. It was represented by him, with arguments which seemed to appeal to prudence as well as feeling, that, after the step which they had taken, she could not possibly appear in England again but as his wife. He was, therefore, he said, resolved not to deposit her in a convent, till she had consented, by the ceremony of a marriage, to confirm to him that right of protecting her, which he had now but temporarily assumed. It did not, we may suppose, require much eloquence, to convince her heart of the truth of this reasoning; and, accordingly, at a little village, not far from Calais, they were married about the latter end of March, 1772, by a priest well known for his services on such occasions.

They thence immediately proceeded to Lisle, where they were found by Mr. Linley. After a few words of private explanation from Sheridan, which had the effect of reconciling him to his truant daughter, Mr. Linley insisted upon her returning with him immediately to England, in order to fulfil some engagements which he had entered into on her account; and, a promise being given that, as soon as these engagements were accomplished, she should be allowed to resume her plan of retirement at Lisle, the whole party set off amicably together for England.

During their absence Mr. Mathews had published several scurrilous libels about Sheridan and Miss Linley in the "Bath Chronicle;" and on his return he started off to London with his brother Charles, and instantly called Mathews out.

Being complete masters of their weapons, they fought with great skill and resolution, each being highly incensed. Eventually, however, Mathews was disarmed by his adversary rushing in upon him, and in the struggle was borne to the ground. In this prostrate situation the libeller sued for his life, which was granted on his signing a confession of his perfidy, of the gross falsehoods he had circulated, and retracting them in toto.

Unfortunately the matter was not to terminate here. Sheri-

dan on his return to Bath, as he was bound to do, in full satisfaction of his aggrieved honour, and in justice to the lady whose cause he had undertaken to defend, published the following confession of the delinquent in the public journals in which the offensive paragraphs had appeared:—

"Being convinced that the expressions I made use of to Mr. Sheridan's disadvantage were the effects of passion and misrepresentation, I retract what I have said to that gentleman's disadvantage, and particularly beg his pardon for my advertisement in the 'Bath Chronicle.'

"THOMAS MATHEWS."

With the odour of this transaction fresh about him, Mr. Mathews retired to his estate in Wales, and, as he might have expected, found himself universally shunned. In this crisis of his character, a Mr. Barnett, who had but lately come to reside in his neighbourhood, took upon him to urge earnestly the necessity of a second meeting with Sheridan, as the only means of removing the stigma left by the first; and, with a degree of Irish friendliness, not forgotten in the portrait of Sir Lucius O'Trigger, offered himself to be the bearer of the challenge. The desperation of persons in Mr. Mathews' circumstances, is in general much more formidable than the most acknowledged valour; and we may easily believe that it was with no ordinary eagerness he accepted the proposal of his new ally, and proceeded with him, full of vengeance, to Bath.

The letter containing the preliminaries of the challenge was delivered by Mr. Barnett, with rather unnecessary cruelty, into the hands of Miss Sheridan, under the pretext, however, that it was a note of invitation for her brother, and on the following morning, before it was quite daylight, the parties met at Kingsdown—Mr. Mathews attended by his neighbour Mr. Barnett, and Sheridan by a gentleman of the name of Paumier, nearly as young as himself, and but little qualified for a trust of such importance and delicacy.

The combat appears to have been fierce and sanguinary; drawing their swords, they rushed upon each other, fought with savage resolution, and in proportion to their violence with want of skill. At last Sheridan endeavoured to rush in on his adversary, as on the previous occasion, with the hope of disarming him; Mr. Mathews received him upon his point, and disengaging, gave him a second wound, breaking his sword in the attack. They then closed and fell, and several more wounds were indiscriminately inflicted, Mr. Sheridan's sword being broken in the fall. Mathews having the advantage, being uppermost, pressed heavily upon Sheridan, and, attacking him with his broken sword, exultingly asked him if he would beg for his life. "No, by God, I won't," was the reply. The seconds then interfered, and Sheridan was taken to Bath in a chaise; Mathews and his friend leaving at once for London.

The following account is given as an "Extract of a letter from Bath," in the "St. James's Chronicle," July 4:—

"Young Sheridan and Captain Mathews of this town, who lately had a rencontre in a tavern in London, upon account of the Maid of Bath, Miss Linley, have had another this morning upon Kingsdown, about four miles hence. Sheridan is much wounded, whether mortally or not is yet uncertain. Both their swords breaking upon the first lunge, they threw each other down, and with the broken pieces hacked at each other rolling upon the ground, the seconds standing by, quiet spectators. Mathews is but slightly wounded, and is since gone off." The "Bath Chronicle," on the day after the duel (July 2nd), gives the particulars thus:—"This morning, about three o'clock, a second duel was fought with swords between Captain Mathews and Mr. R. Sheridan, on Kingsdown, near this city, in consequence of their former dispute respecting an amiable young lady, which Mr. M. considered as improperly adjusted, Mr. S. having, since their first rencontre, declared his sentiments respecting Mr. M. in a manner that the former thought required satisfaction. Mr. Sheridan received three or four wounds in his breast and sides, and now lies very ill. Mr. M. was only

slightly wounded, and left this city soon after the affair was over."

Upon the news being broken to Miss Linley, she let the secret of her heart escape, and passionately exclaimed, "My husband! my husband!"—demanding to see him, and insisting upon her right as his wife to be near him, and watch over him day and night. Her entreaties, however, could not be complied with; for the elder Mr. Sheridan, on his return from town, incensed and grieved at the catastrophe to which his son's imprudent passion had led, refused for some time even to see him, and strictly forbade all intercourse between his daughters and the Linley family. Upon Sheridan's recovery, however, Mr. Linley, finding that it was impossible to keep the young people apart, consented to their union, and, on the 13th of April, 1773, they were married by licence.

A curious instance of the indolence and procrastinating habits of Sheridan used to be related by Woodfall, as having occurred about this time. A statement of his conduct in the duels having appeared in one of the Bath papers, so false and calumnious as to require an immediate answer, he called upon Woodfall to request that his paper might be the medium of it. But wishing, as he said, that the public should have the whole matter fairly before them, he thought it right that the offensive statement should first be inserted, and in a day or two after be followed by his answer, which would thus come with more relevancy and effect. In compliance with his wish, Woodfall lost not a moment in transcribing the calumnious article into his columns—not doubting, of course, that the refutation of it would be furnished with still greater eagerness. Day after day, however, elapsed, and, notwithstanding frequent applications on the one side, and promises on the other, not a line of the answer was ever sent by Sheridan, who, having expended all his activity in assisting the circulation of the poison, had not industry enough left to supply the antidote. Throughout his whole life, indeed, he but too consistently acted upon the principles which the first Lord Holland used playfully to impress

upon his son:—"Never do to-day what you can possibly put off till to-morrow, nor ever do, yourself, what you can get any one else to do for you."

Mr. Sheridan, immediately upon his marriage, with a pride and delicacy which received the tribute of Dr. Johnson's praise, rejected all thoughts of allowing his wife to appear in public; and, instead of profiting by the display of her talents, adopted the manlier resolution of seeking an independence by his own. After passing the winter with Storiace, an intimate friend of the Linleys, they went to reside in Orchard Street, Portman Square, and, in 1774, it appears, from the following extract from a letter to Mr. Linley, that "The Rivals" was written and about to be put into rehearsal.

"I have been very seriously at work on a book, which I am just now sending to the press, and which I think will do me some credit, if it leads to nothing else. However, the profitable affair is of another nature. There will be a comedy of mine in rehearsal at Covent Garden within a few days. I did not set to work on it till within a few days of my setting out for Crome, so you may think I have not, for these last six weeks, been very idle. I have done it at Mr. Harris's (the manager's) own request; it is now complete in his hands, and preparing for the stage. He, and some of his friends also who have heard it, assure me in the most flattering terms that there is not a doubt of its success. It will be very well played, and Harris tells me that the least shilling I shall get (if it succeeds) will be six hundred pounds as I shall make no secret of it towards the time of representation, that it may not lose any support my friends can give it. I had not written a line of it two months ago, except a scene or two, in which I believe you have seen in an odd act of a little farce."

On the 17th of January, 1775, the comedy of "The Rivals" was brought out at Covent Garden.

This comedy was at first coldly received, and failed on its first representation chiefly from the bad acting of Mr. Lee as Sir Lucius O'Trigger. Another actor, however, Mr. Clinch, was selected

tnted in his place, and the play being lightened of this and some other encumbrances, rose at once into the higher region of public favour. With much less wit, it exhibits perhaps more humour than "The School for Scandal," and the dialogue, though by no means so pointed or sparkling, is, in this respect, more natural, as coming nearer the current coin of ordinary conversation; whereas the circulating medium of "The School for Scandal" is diamonds. The characters of "The Rivals," on the contrary, are *not* such as occur very commonly in the world; and, instead of producing striking effects with natural and obvious materials, which is the great art and difficulty of a painter of human life, Sheridan has here overcharged most of his persons with whims and absurdities, for which the circumstances they are engaged in afford but a very disproportionate vent. Accordingly, for our insight into their characters, we are indebted rather to their confessions than their actions. Lydia Languish, in proclaiming the extravagance of her own romantic notions, prepares us for events much more ludicrous and eccentric than those in which the plot allows her to be concerned; and the young lady herself is scarcely more disappointed than we are, at the tameness with which her amour concludes. Among the various ingredients supposed to be mixed up in the composition of Sir Lucius O'Trigger, his love of fighting is the only one whose flavour is very strongly brought out; and the wayward, captious jealousy of Falkland, though so highly coloured in his own representation of it, is productive of no incident answerable to such an announcement—the imposture which he practises upon Julia being, perhaps, weakened in its effect by our recollection of the same device in the "Nut-brown Maid" and "Peregrine Pickle."

The character of Sir Anthony Absolute is, perhaps, the best sustained and most natural of any, and the scenes between him and Captain Absolute are richly, genuinely dramatic. His surprise at the apathy with which his son receives the glowing picture which he draws of the charms of his destined bride, and the effect of the question, "And which is to be mine, sir—the

niece or the aunt?" are in the truest style of humour. Mrs. Malaprop's mistakes, in what she herself calls "orthodoxy," have been often objected to as improbable from a woman in her rank of life; but though some of them, it must be owned, are extravagant and farcical, they are almost all amusing—and the luckiness of her simile, "as headstrong as an 'allegory' on the banks of the Nile," will be acknowledged as long as there are writers to be run away with, by the wilfulness of this truly "headstrong" species of composition.

The following humorous dedication was written by Sheridan in a copy of "The Rivals," belonging to his brother-in-law Tickle; and, as the reader will perceive, by the allusions in it to the two Whig ministries, it could not have been written before the year 1784:—

"DEDICATION TO IDLENESS.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—

"If it were necessary to make an apology for this freedom, I know you would think it a sufficient one, that I shall find it easier to dedicate my play to you than to any other person. There is likewise a propriety in prefixing your name to a work begun entirely at your suggestion, and finished under your auspices; and I should think myself wanting in gratitude to you, if I did not take an early opportunity of acknowledging the obligations which I owe you. There was a time—though it is so long ago that I now scarcely remember it, and cannot mention it without compunction—but there was a time when the importunity of parents, and the example of a few injudicious young men of my acquaintance, had almost prevailed on me to thwart my genius, and prostitute my abilities by an application to serious pursuits. And if you had not opened my eyes to the absurdity and profligacy of such a perversion of the best gifts of nature, I am by no means clear that I might not have been a wealthy merchant or an eminent lawyer at this very moment. Nor was it only on my first setting out in life that I availed myself of a connection with you, though, perhaps, I

never reaped such signal advantages from it as at that critical period. I have frequently since stood in need of your admonitions, and have always found you ready to assist me, though you were frequently brought by your zeal for me into new and awkward situations, and such as you were at first, naturally enough, unwilling to appear in. Amongst innumerable other instances, I cannot omit two, where you afforded me considerable and unexpected relief, and, in fact, converted employments usually attended by dry and disgusting business, into scenes of perpetual merriment and recreation. I allude, as you will easily imagine, to those cheerful hours which I spent in the Secretary of State's office and the Treasury, during all which time you were my inseparable companion, and showed me such a preference over the rest of my colleagues, as excited at once their envy and admiration. Indeed, it was very natural for them to repine at your having taught me a way of doing business, which it was impossible for them to follow—it was both original and inimitable.

"If I were to say here all that I think of your excellences, I might be suspected of flattery; but I beg leave to refer you for the test of my sincerity to the constant tenor of my life and actions; and shall conclude with a sentiment of which no one can dispute the truth, nor mistake the application—that those persons usually deserve most of their friends who expect least of them.

"I am, &c., &c., &c.,

"R. B. SHERIDAN."

In gratitude, it is said, to Clinch, the actor, for the seasonable reinforcements which he had brought to "The Rivals," Mr. Sheridan produced this year a farce called "St. Patrick's Day, or the Scheming Lieutenant," which was acted on the 2nd of May, and had considerable success.

Mr. Sheridan had now got into a current of dramatic fancy, of whose prosperous flow he continued to avail himself actively. The summer recess of 1775 was employed in

writing "The Duenna;" and his father-in-law, Mr. Linley, assisted in selecting and composing the music for it.

On the 21st of November, 1775, "The Duenna" was performed at Covent Garden with the greatest success. Sixty-three nights was the career of "The Beggars' Opera;" but "The Duenna" was acted no less than seventy-five times during the season, the only intermissions being a few days at Christmas, and the Fridays in every week;—the latter on account of Leoni, who, being a Jew, could not act on those nights.

The intrigue of this piece (which is mainly founded upon an incident borrowed from "The Country Wife" of Wycherly) is constructed and managed with considerable adroitness, having just material enough to be wound out into three acts, without being encumbered by too much intricacy, or weakened by too much extension. It does not appear, from the rough copy, that any material change was made in the plan of the work, as it proceeded. Carlos was originally meant to be a Jew, and is called "Cousin Moses" by Isaac, in the first sketch of the dialogue; but, possibly, from the consideration that this would apply too personally to Leoni, who was to perform the character, its designation was altered. The scene in the second act, where Carlos is introduced by Isaac to the Duenna, stood, in its original state, as follows:—

"*Isaac.* Moses, sweet coz, I thrive, I prosper.

"*Moses.* Where is your mistress?

"*Isaac.* There, you booby, there she stands.

"*Moses.* Why she's damn'd ugly.

"*Isaac.* Hush! (*Stops his mouth.*)

"*Duenna.* What is your friend saying, Don?

"*Isaac.* Oh, ma'am, he's expressing his raptures at such charms as he never saw before.

"*Moses.* Ay, such as I never saw before indeed. (*Aside.*)

"*Duenna.* You are very obliging, gentlemen; but, I dare say, sir, your friend is no stranger to the influence of beauty. I doubt not but he is a lover himself.

"*Moses.* Alas! madam, there is now but one woman living,

whom I have any love for, and truly, ma'am, you resemble her wonderfully.

"*Duenna.* Well, sir, I wish she may give you her hand as speedily as I shall mine to your friend.

"*Moses.* Me her hand!—O Lord, ma'am—she is the last woman in the world I could think of marrying.

"*Duenna.* What then, sir, are you comparing me to some wanton—some courtesan?

"*Isaac.* Zounds! he durstn't.

"*Moses.* O not I, upon my soul.

"*Duenna.* Yes, he meant some young harlot—some——

"*Moses.* Oh, dear madam, no—it was my mother I meant, as I hope to be saved.

"*Isaac.* Oh the blundering villain! (*Aside.*)

"*Duenna.* How, sir—am I so like your mother?

"*Isaac.* Stay, dear madam—my friend meant—that you put him in mind of what his mother was when a girl—didn't you, Moses?

"*Moses.* Oh yes, madam, my mother was formerly a great beauty, a great toast, I assure you;—and when she married my father about thirty years ago, as you may perhaps remember, ma'am——

"*Duenna.* I, sir! I remember thirty years ago!

"*Isaac.* Oh, to be sure not, ma'am—thirty years!—no, no—it was thirty months he said, ma'am—wasn't it, Moses?

"*Moses.* Yes, yes, ma'am—thirty months ago, on her marriage with my father, she was, as I was saying, a great beauty;—but catching cold, the year afterwards, in child-bed of your humble servant——

"*Duenna.* Of you, sir!—and married within these thirty months!

"*Isaac.* Oh the devil! he has made himself out but a year old!—Come, Moses, hold your tongue!—You must excuse him, ma'am—he means to be civil—but he is a poor simple fellow—ain't you, Moses?

"*Moses.* 'Tis true, indeed, ma'am," &c. &c. &c.

The greater part of the humour of Moses here was afterwards transferred to the character of Isaac, and it will be perceived that a few of the points are still retained by him.

The wit of the dialogue, except in one or two instances, is of that accessible kind which lies near the surface—which is

produced without effort, and may be enjoyed without wonder. He had not yet searched his fancy for those curious fossils of thought, which make "The School for Scandal" such a rich museum of wit. Of this precious kind, however, is the description of Isaac's neutrality in religion—"like the blank leaf between the Old and New Testament." As an instance, too, of the occasional abuse of this research, which led him to mistake laboured conceits for fancies, may be mentioned the far-fetched comparison of serenaders to Egyptian embalmers, "extracting the brain through the ears."

In the speech of Lopez, the servant, with which the opera opens, there are, in the original copy, some humorous points, which appear to have fallen under the pruning knife, but which are not unworthy of being gathered up here :—

"A plague on these haughty damsels, say I :—when they play their airs on their whining gallants, they ought to consider that we are the chief sufferers,—we have all their ill-humours at second-hand. Donna Louisa's cruelty to my master usually converts itself into blows, by the time it gets to me :—she can frown me black and blue at any time, and I shall carry the marks of the last box on the ear she gave him to my grave. Nay, if she smiles on any one else, I am the sufferer for it :—if she says a civil word to a rival, I am a rogue and a scoundrel ; and, if she sends him a letter, my back is sure to pay the postage."

In the scene between Ferdinand and Jerome (act ii. scene 3) the following lively speech of the latter was left out :—

"*Ferdin.* . . . . but he has never sullied his honour, which, with his title, has outlived his means.

"*Jerome.* Have they ? More shame for them ! What business have honour or titles to survive, when property is extinct ? Nobility is but as a helpmate to a good fortune, and, like a Japanese wife, should perish on the funeral pile of the estate !"

In the first act, too (scene 3), where Jerome abuses the

Duenna, there is an equally unaccountable omission of a sentence, in which he compares the old lady's face to "parchment, on which Time and Deformity have engrossed their titles."

Though some of the poetry of this opera is not much above that ordinary kind to which music is so often doomed to be wedded—making up by her own sweetness for the dulness of her helpmate—by far the greater number of the songs are full of beauty, and some of them may rank among the best models of lyric writing. The verses "Had I a heart for falsehood framed," notwithstanding the stiffness of this word "framed," and one or two other slight blemishes, are not unworthy of living in recollection with the matchless air to which they are adapted.

There is another song, less known from being connected with less popular music, which, for deep impassioned feeling and natural eloquence, has not, perhaps, its rival, through the whole range of lyric poetry. As these verses are generally omitted from "The Duenna," I feel myself abundantly authorized in citing them here, even if their beauty were not a sufficient excuse for recalling them, under any circumstances, to the recollection of the reader:—

"Ah, cruel maid, how hast thou chang'd
The temper of my mind!
My heart, by thee from love estrang'd,
Becomes, like thee, unkind.

"By fortune favour'd, clear in fame,
I once ambitious was;
And friends I had who fann'd the flame,
And gave my youth applause.

"But now my weakness all accuse,
Yet vain their taunts on me;
Friends, fortune, fame itself I'd lose,
To gain one smile from thee.

"And only thou should'st not despise
My weakness or my woe;
If I am mad in others' eyes,
'Tis thou hast made me so.

"But days, like this, with doubting cast,
I will not long endure—
Am I disdain'd—I know the worst,
And likewise know my cure.

"If, false, her vows she dare renounce,
That instant ends my pain;
For, oh! the heart must break at once,
That cannot hate again."

In comparing this poem with the original words of the air to which it is adapted (Parnell's pretty lines, "My days have been so wondrous free"), it will be felt, at once, how wide is the difference between the cold and graceful effusions of taste, and the fervid bursts of real genius—between the delicate product of the conservatory, and the rich child of the sunshine.

In the song beginning "Friendship is the bond of reason," the third verse was originally thus:—

"And should I cheat the world and thee,
One smile from her I love to win,
Such breach of human faith would be
A sacrifice and not a sin."

To the song "Give Isaac the nymph," there were at first two more verses, which, merely to show how judicious was the omission of them, are here transcribed:—

"To one thus accomplish'd I durst speak my mind,
And flattery doubtless would soon make her kind;
For the man that should praise her she needs must adore,
Who ne'er in her life received praises before.

"But the frowns of a beauty in hopes to remove,
Should I prate of her charms, and tell of my love;
No thanks wait the praise which she knows to be true,
Nor smiles for the homage she takes as her due."

Among literary piracies or impostures, there are few more audacious than the Dublin edition of "The Duenna"—in which, though the songs are given accurately, an entirely new dialogue is substituted for that of Sheridan, and his gold, as in

the barter of Glaucus, exchanged for such copper as the following:—

"*Duen.* Well, sir, I don't want to stay in your house; but I must go and lock up my wardrobe.

"*Isaac.* Your wardrobe! when you came into my house you could carry your wardrobe in your comb-case, you could, you old dragon."

Another specimen:—

"*Isaac.* Her voice, too, you told me, was like a Virginian nightingale; why, it is like a cracked warming-pan—and, as for dimples!—to be sure, she has the devil's own dimples. Yes! and you told me she had a lovely down upon her chin, like the down of a peach; but, damn me if ever I saw such down upon any creature in my life, except once upon an old goat."

These jokes, it is needless to add, are all the gratuitous contributions of the editor.

Towards the close of the year 1775, it was understood that Garrick intended to retire from the stage, and to part with his moiety of the patent of Drury Lane Theatre. He was then in the sixtieth year of his age, and, looking round him for some worthy successor, he determined on offering the post to the rising young dramatist. The progress of the negotiation between them, which ended in making Sheridan patentee and manager, cannot be better traced than in his letters addressed at the time to Mr. Linley.

"Sunday, Dec. 31, 1775.

"DEAR SIR,—

"I was always one of the slowest letter-writers in the world, though I have had more excuses than usual for my delay in this instance. The principal matter of business, on which I was to have written to you, related to our embryo negotiation with Garrick, of which I will now give you an account.

"Since you left town, Mrs. Ewart has been so ill, as to con-

tinue near three weeks at the point of death. This, of course, has prevented Mr. E. from seeing anybody on business, or from accompanying me to Garrick's. However, about ten days ago, I talked the matter over with him by myself, and the result was, appointing Thursday evening last to meet him, and bring Ewart, which I did accordingly. On the whole of our conversation that evening, I began (for the first time) to think him *really serious* in the business. He still, however, kept the reserve of giving the refusal to Colman, though at the same time he did not hesitate to assert his confidence that Colman would decline it. I was determined to push him on this point (as it was really farcical for us to treat with him under such an evasion), and at last he promised to put the question to Colman, and to give me a decisive answer by the ensuing Sunday (to-day). Accordingly, within this hour, I have received a note from him, which (as I meant to show it my father) I here transcribe for you.

"'Mr. Garrick presents his compliments to Mr. Sheridan, and as he is obliged to go into the country for three days, he should be glad to see him upon his return to town, either on Wednesday about six or seven o'clock, or whenever he pleases. The party has no objection to the whole, but chooses no partner but Mr. G. Not a word of this yet. Mr. G. sent a messenger on purpose (i.e. to Colman). He would call upon Mr. S., but he is confined at home. Your name is upon our list.'

"This *decisive answer* may be taken two ways. However, as Mr. G. informed Mr. Ewart and me, that he had no authority or pretensions to treat for *the whole*, it appears to me that Mr. Garrick's meaning in this note is, that Mr. Colman *declines* the purchase of *Mr. Garrick's share*, which is the point in debate, and the only part at present to be sold. I shall, therefore, wait on G. at the time mentioned, and, if I understand him right, we shall certainly without delay appoint two men of business and the law to meet on the matter, and come to a conclusion without further delay.

"*According* to his demand, the whole is valued at £70,000.

He appears very shy of letting his books be looked into, as the test of the profits on this sum, but says it must be in its nature, a purchase on speculation. However, he has promised me a rough estimate, of *his own*, of the entire receipts for the last seven years. But, after all, it must certainly be a *purchase on speculation* without *money's worth* being *made out*. One point he solemnly avers, which is, that he will never part with it under the price above-mentioned.

"This is all I can say on the subject till Wednesday, though I can't help adding, that I think we might *safely* give £5000 more on this purchase than richer people. The whole valued at £70,000, the annual interest is £3500; while this is *cleared*, the proprietors are *safe*—but I think it must be *infernal* management indeed that does not double it.

"I suppose Mr. Stanley has written to you relative to your oratorio orchestra. The demand, I reckon, will be diminished one-third, and the appearance remain very handsome, which, if the other affair takes place, you will find your account in; and, if you discontinue your partnership with Stanley at Drury Lane, the orchestra may revert to whichever wants it, on the other's paying his proportion for the use of it this year. This is Mr. Garrick's idea, and, as he says, might in that case be settled by arbitration.

"You have heard of our losing Miss Brown; however, we have missed her so little in 'The Duenna,' that the managers have not tried to regain her, which I believe they might have done. I have had some books of the music these many days to send you down. I wanted to put Tom's name in the new music, and begged Mrs. L. to ask you, and let me have a line on her arrival, for which purpose I kept back the index of the songs. If you or he have no objection, pray let me know—I'll send the music to-morrow.

"I am finishing a two-act comedy for Covent Garden, which will be in rehearsal in a week. We have given 'The Duenna' a respite this Christmas, but nothing else at present brings money. We have every place in the house taken for the three

next nights, and shall, at least, play it fifty nights, with only the Friday's intermission.

"My best love and the compliments of the season to all your fire-side.

"Your grandson is a very magnificent fellow.*

"Yours ever sincerely,

"R. B. SHERIDAN."

"January 4, 1776.

"DEAR SIR,—

"I left Garrick last night too late to write to you. He has offered Colman the refusal, and showed me his answer; which was (as in the note) that he was willing to purchase the whole, but would have no partner but Garrick. On this, Mr. Garrick appointed a meeting with his partner, young Leasy,† and, in presence of their solicitor, treasurer, &c., declared to him that he was absolutely on the point of settling, and, if *he* was willing, he might have the same price for his share; but that if he (Leasy) would not sell, Mr. Garrick would, instantly, to another party. The result was, Leasy's declaring his intention of not parting with his share. Of this Garrick again informed Colman, who immediately gave up the whole matter.

"Garrick was extremely explicit, and, in short, we came to a final resolution. So that, if the necessary matters are made out to all our satisfactions, we may sign and seal a previous agreement within a fortnight.

"I meet him again to-morrow evening, when we are to name a day for a conveyancer on our side, to meet his solicitor, Wallace. I have pitched on a Mr. Phips, at the recommendation and by the advice of Dr. Ford. The three first steps to be taken are these:—our lawyer is to look into the titles, tenure, &c., of the house and adjoining estate, the extent and limitations of the patent, &c. We should then employ a builder (I think, Mr. Collins), to survey the state and repair in which the

* Sheridan's first child, Thomas, born in the preceding year.

† Mr. Lacy.

whole premises are, to which G. entirely assents. Mr. G. will then give us a fair and attested estimate from his books of what the profits have been, at an average, for these last seven years.* This he has shown me in rough, and valuing the property at £70,000, the interest has exceeded ten per cent.

"We should, after this, certainly make an interest to get the king's promise, that, while the theatre is well conducted, &c., he will grant no patent for a third—though G. seems confident that he never will. If there is any truth in professions and appearances, G. seems likely always to continue our friend, and to give every assistance in his power.

"The method of our sharing the purchase, I should think, may be thus:—Ewart to take £10,000, you £10,000, and I £10,000. Dr. Ford agrees, with the greatest pleasure, to embark the other five; and, if you do not choose to venture so much, will, I dare say, share it with you. Ewart is preparing his money, and I have a certainty of my part. We shall have a very useful ally in Dr. Ford; and my father offers his services on our own terms. We cannot unite Garrick to our interests too firmly; and I am convinced his influence will bring Leasy to our terms, if he should be ill-advised enough to desire to interfere in what he is totally unqualified for.

"I'll write to you to-morrow, relative to Leasy's mortgage (which Garrick has, and advises us to take), and many other particulars. When matters are in a certain train (which I hope will be in a week), I suppose you will not hesitate to come to town for a day or two. Garrick proposes, when we are satisfied with the bargain, to sign a previous article, with a penalty of £10,000 on the parties who break from fulfilling the purchase. When we are once satisfied and determined in the business (which, I own, is my case), the sooner that is done the better. I must urge it particularly, as my confidential connection with the other house is peculiarly distressing, till I can with prudence

* These accounts were found among Mr. Sheridan's papers. Garrick's income from the theatre for the year 1775-6 is thus stated:—Author, £400; salary, £800; manager, £500.

reveal my situation, and such a treaty (however prudently managed) cannot long be kept secret, especially as Leasy is now convinced of Garrick's resolution.

"I am exceedingly hurried at present, so excuse omissions, and do not flag, when we come to the point. I'll answer for it, we shall see many golden campaigns.

"Yours ever,

"R. B. SHERIDAN.

"You have heard, I suppose, that Foote is likely never to show his face again."

"January 31st, 1776.

"DEAR SIR,—

"I am glad you have found a person who will let you have the money at four per cent. The security will be very clear; but, as there is some degree of risk, as in the case of fire, I think four per cent. uncommonly reasonable. It will scarcely be any advantage to pay it off, for your houses and chapel, I suppose, bring in much more. Therefore, while you can raise money at four per cent. on the security of your theatrical share *only*, you will be right to alter, as little as you can, the present disposition of your property.

"As to your quitting Bath, I cannot see why you should doubt a moment about it. Surely, the undertaking in which you embark such a sum as £10,000 ought to be the chief object of your attention—and, supposing you did not choose to give up all your time to the theatre, you may certainly employ yourself more profitably in London than in Bath. But, if you are willing (as I suppose you will be) to make the theatre the great object of your attention, rely on it you may lay aside every doubt of not finding your account in it; for the fact is, we shall have nothing but our own equity to consult in making and obtaining any demand for exclusive trouble. Leasy is utterly unequal to any department in the theatre. He has an opinion of me, and is very willing to let the whole burthen and ostensibility be taken off his shoulders. But I certainly should not give up

my time and labour (for his superior advantage, having so much greater a share) without some exclusive advantage. Yet, I should by no means make the demand till I had shown myself equal to the task. My father purposes to be with us but one year; and that only to give me what advantage he can from his experience. He certainly must be paid for his trouble, and so certainly must you. You have experience and character equal to the line you would undertake; and it never can enter into anybody's head that you were to give your time or any part of your attention gratis, because you had a share in the theatre. I have spoke on this subject both to Garrick and Leasy, and you will find no demur on any side to your gaining a *certain* income from the theatre—greater, I think, than you could make out of it—and in this the theatre will be acting only for its own advantage. At the same time, you may always make leisure for a few select scholars, whose interest may also serve the greater cause of your patentee-ship.

"I have had a young man with me who wants to appear as a singer in plays or oratorios. I think you'll find him likely to be serviceable in either. He is not one and twenty, and has no conceit. He has a good tenor voice—very good ear, and a great deal of execution, of the right kind. He reads notes very quick, and can accompany himself. This is Betsy's verdict, who sat in judgment on him on Sunday last. I have given him no answer, but engaged him to wait till you come to town.

"You must not regard the reports in the paper about a third theatre—that's all nonsense.

"Betsy's and my love to all. Your grandson astonishes everybody by his vivacity, his talents for music and poetry, and the most perfect integrity of mind.

"Yours most sincerely,

"R. B. SHERIDAN."

In the following June, the contract with Garrick was perfected; and, in a paper drawn up by Mr. Sheridan many years after, I find the shares of the respective purchasers thus stated:-

	£
Mr. Sheridan, two-fourteenths of the whole: ..	10,000
Mr. Linley, ditto	10,000
Dr. Ford, three ditto	15,000

Mr. Ewart, though originally mentioned as one of the parties, had no concern in the final arrangement.

The first contribution which the dramatic talent of the new manager furnished to the stock of the theatre, was an alteration of Vanbrugh's comedy, "The Relapse," which was brought out on the 24th of February, 1777, under the title of "The Trip to Scarborough."

In reading the original play, we are struck with surprise, that Sheridan should ever have hoped to be able to *defecate* such dialogue, and, at the same time, leave any of the wit, whose whole spirit is in the lees, behind. The very life of such characters as Berinthia is their licentiousness, and it is with them, as with objects that are luminous from putrescence—to remove their taint is to extinguish their light. If Sheridan, indeed, had substituted some of his own wit for that which he took away, the inanition that followed the operation would have been much less sensibly felt. But to be so liberal of a treasure so precious, and for the enrichment of the work of another, could hardly have been expected from him. Besides, it may be doubted whether the subject had not already yielded its utmost to Vanbrugh, and whether, even in the hands of Sheridan, it could have been brought to bear a second crop of wit.

"The Trip to Scarborough" proving a comparative failure, Mr. Sheridan revived the drooping glories of Old Drury by writing the unrivalled comedy, "The School for Scandal."

It is a curious fact that, although this species of composition requires more worldly experience and knowledge of human nature than any other, almost all our best comedies have been written by very young men. Those of Congreve were all produced before he was five-and-twenty. Farquhar produced "The Constant Couple" in his two-and-twentieth year, and

died at thirty. Vanbrugh was a young ensign when he sketched out "The Relapse" and "The Provoked Wife," and Sheridan reached the summit of his dramatic reputation at six and twenty.

This work was no rapid offspring of a careless but vigorous fancy, anticipating the results of experience by a sort of second-sight inspiration; on the contrary, it was the deliberate result of many doubtful experiments, gradually unfolding beauties unforeseen even by him who produced them, and arriving, step by step, at perfection. Mr. Moore proves that such was the tardy process by which "The School for Scandal" was produced, by laying before the public the first sketches of its plan and catalogue, which cannot fail to interest all those who delight tracing the growth and application of genius.

The first sketch was probably written before "The Rivals," or at least very soon after it. It appears to have been Sheridan's intention to satirize some of the gossips of Bath, from the following hints, which are headed—

"THE SLANDERERS.—*A Pump-Room Scene.*

"*Friendly caution to the newspapers.*

"It is whispered——

"She is a constant attendant at church, and very frequently takes Dr. M'Brawn home with her.

"Mr. Worthy is very good to the girl;—for my part, I dare swear he has no ill intention.

"What! Major Wesley's Miss Montague?

"Lud, ma'am, the match is certainly broke—no creature knows the cause;—some say a flaw in the lady's character, and others, in the gentleman's fortune.

"To be sure they do say——

"I hate to repeat what I hear.

"She was inclined to be a little too plump before she went.

"The most intrepid blush;—I've known her complexion stand fire for an hour together.

"'She had twins,'—How ill-natured! as I hope to be saved, ma'am, she had but one! and that a little starved brat not worth mentioning.

The following is the opening scene of his first sketch, from which it will be perceived that the original plot was wholly different from what it is at present,—Sir Peter and Lady Teazle being at that time not yet in existence.

"LADY SNEERWELL *and* SPATTER.*

"*Lady S.* The paragraphs, you say, were all inserted.

"*Spat.* They were, madam.

"*Lady S.* Did you circulate the report of Lady Brittle's intrigue with Captain Boastall?

"*Spat.* Madam, by this Lady Brittle is the talk of half the town, and in a week will be treated as a demirep.

"*Lady S.* What have you done as to the innuendo of Miss Nicely's fondness for her own footman?

"*Spat.* 'Tis in a fair train, ma'am. I told it to my hair-dresser,—he courts a milliner's girl in Pall-Mall, whose mistress has a first cousin who is waiting-woman to Lady Clackit. I think in about fourteen hours it must reach Lady Clackit, and then you know the business is done.

"*Lady S.* But is that sufficient, do you think?

"*Spat.* O Lud, ma'am, I'll undertake to ruin the character of the primmest prude in London with half as much. Ha! ha! Did your ladyship never hear how poor Miss Shepherd lost her lover and her character last summer at Scarborough? this was the whole of it. One evening at Lady ———'s the conversation happened to turn on the difficulty of breeding Nova Scotia sheep in England. 'I have known instances,' says Miss ———, 'for last spring a friend of mine, Miss Shepherd of Ramsgate, had a Nova Scotia sheep that produced her twins.'—'What!' cries the old deaf dowager Lady Bowlwell, 'has Miss Shepherd of Ramsgate been brought to bed of twins?' This mistake, as you may suppose, set the company a laughing. However, the next day, Miss Verjuice Amarilla Lonely, who had been of the party, talking of Lady Bowlwell's deafness, began to tell what had happened; but, unluckily, forgetting to say a word of the sheep, it was understood by the company, and, in every circle, many believed, that Miss Shepherd of Ramsgate had actually been brought to bed of a fine boy and girl; and, in less than a fortnight, there were people who could name the father, and the farm-house where the babes were put out to nurse.

* Afterwards Snake.

"*Lady S.* Ha! ha! well, for a stroke of luck, it was a very good one. I suppose you find no difficulty in spreading the report on the censorious Miss ———.

"*Spat.* None in the world,—she has always been so prudent and reserved, that everybody was sure there was some reason for it at the bottom.

"*Lady S.* Yes, a tale of scandal is as fatal to the credit of a prude as a fever to those of the strongest constitutions; but there is a sort of sickly reputation that outlives hundreds of the robuster character of a prude.

"*Spat.* True, ma'am, there are valetudinarians in reputation as in constitutions; and both are cautious from their appreciation and consciousness of their weak side, and avoid the least breath of air.*

"*Lady S.* But, Spatter, I have something of greater confidence now to entrust you with. I think I have some claim to your gratitude.

"*Spat.* Have I ever shown myself one moment unconscious of what I owe you?

"*Lady S.* I do not charge you with it, but this is an affair of importance. You are acquainted with my situation, but not all my weaknesses. I was hurt, in the early part of my life, by the envenomed tongue of scandal, and ever since, I own, have no joy but in sullying the fame of others. In this I have found you an apt tool: you have often been the instrument of my revenge, but you must now assist me in a softer passion. A young widow with a little beauty and easy fortune is seldom driven to sue,—yet is that my case. Of the many you have seen here, have you ever observed me, secretly, to favour one?

"*Spat.* Egad! I never was more posed: I'm sure you cannot mean that ridiculous old knight, Sir Christopher Crab?

"*Lady S.* A wretch! his assiduities are my torment.

"*Spat.* Perhaps his nephew, the baronet, Sir Benjamin Backbite, is the happy man?

"*Lady S.* No, though he has ill-nature and a good person on his side, he is not to my taste. What think you of Clerimont?†

* This is one of the many instances where the improving effect of revision may be traced. The passage at present stands thus:—"There are valetudinarians in reputation as well as constitution, who, being conscious of their weak part, avoid the least breath of air, and supply the want of stamina by care and circumspection."

† Afterwards called Florival.

"*Spat.* How! the professed lover of your ward, Maria; between whom, too, there is a mutual affection.

"*Lady S.* Yes, that insensible, that dozing oh an idiot, is the man.

"*Spat.* But how can you hope to succeed?

"*Lady S.* By poisoning both with jealousy of the other, till the credulous fool, in a pique, shall be entangled in my snare.

"*Spat.* Have you taken any measure for it?

"*Lady S.* I have. Maria has made me the confidante of Clerimont's love for her: In return, I pretended to entrust her with my affection for Sir Benjamin, who is her warm admirer. By strong representation of my passion, I prevailed on her not to refuse to see Sir Benjamin, which she once promised Clerimont to do. I entreated her to plead my cause, and even drew her in to answer Sir Benjamin's letters with the same intent. Of this I have made Clerimont suspicious; but 'tis you must inflame him to the pitch I want.

"*Spat.* But will not Maria, on the least unkindness of Clerimont, instantly come to an explanation?

"*Lady S.* This is what we must prevent by blinding" * * * * * * *

The scene that follows, between Lady Sneerwell and Maria, gives some insight into the use that was to be made of this intricate groundwork;* and it was, no doubt, the difficulty of managing such an involvement of his personages dramatically, that drove him, luckily for the world, to the construction of a simpler, and, at the same time, more comprehensive plan. He might also, possibly, have been influenced by the consideration, that the chief movement of this plot must depend upon the jealousy of the lover,—a spring of interest which he had already brought sufficiently into play in "The Rivals."

* The following is his own arrangement of the Scenes of the Second Act:—

"Act II. Scene 1st. All.—2nd. Lady S. and Mrs. C.—3rd. Lady S. and * * Em. and Mrs. C. listening.—4th. L. S. and Flor. shows him into the room,—bids him return the other way.—L. S. and Emma.—Emma and Florival;—fits,—maid.—Emma fainting and sobbing:—'Death, don't expose me!'—enter maid,—will call out—all come on with cards and smelling-bottles."

"*Lady Sneerwell.* Well, my love, have you seen Clerimont to-day?

"*Maria.* I have not, nor does he come as often as he used. Indeed, madam, I fear what I have done to serve you has by some means come to his knowledge, and injured me in his opinion. I promised him faithfully never to see Sir Benjamin. What confidence can he ever have in me, if he once finds I have broken my word to him?

"*Lady S.* Nay, you are too grave. If he should suspect anything, it will always be in my power to undeceive him.

"*Mar.* Well, you have involved me in deceit, and I must trust to you to extricate me.

"*Lady S.* Have you answered Sir Benjamin's last letter in the manner I wished?

"*Mar.* I have written exactly as you desired me; but I wish you would give me leave to tell the whole truth to Clerimont at once. There is a coldness in his manner of late, which I can no ways account for.

"*Lady S. (aside).* I'm glad to find I have worked on him so far.—Fie, Maria! have you so little regard for me? would you put me to the shame of being known to love a man who disregards me? Had you entrusted me with such a secret, not a husband's power should have forced it from me. But, do as you please. Go, forget the affection I have shown you: forget that I have been as a mother to you, whom I found an orphan. Go, break through all ties of gratitude, and expose me to the world's derision, to avoid one sullen hour from a moody lover.

"*Mar.* Indeed, madam, you wrong me; and you who know the apprehension of love should make allowance for its weakness. My love for Clerimont is so great—

"*Lady S.* Peace; it cannot exceed mine.

"*Mar.* For Sir Benjamin, perhaps not, ma'am——and, I am sure, Clerimont has as sincere an affection for me.

"*Lady S.* Would to heaven I could say the same!

"*Mar.* Of Sir Benjamin:—I wish so too, ma'am. But I am sure you would be extremely hurt, if, in gaining your wishes, you were to injure me in the opinion of Clerimont.

"*Lady S.* Undoubtedly; I would not for the world—Simple fool! (*aside.*) But my wishes, my happiness depend on you—for, I doat so on the insensible, that it kills me to see him so attached to you. Give me but Clerimont, and—

"*Mar.* Clerimont!

"*Lady S.* Sir Benjamin, you know I mean. Is he not attached to you? am I not slighted for you? Yet, do I bear any enmity to you, as my rival? I only request your friendly intercession, and you are so ungrateful, you would deny me that.

"*Mar.* Nay, madam, have I not done everything you wished? For you, I have departed from truth, and contaminated my mind with falsehood—what could I do more to serve you?

"*Lady S.* Well, forgive me, I was too warm; I know you would not betray me. I expect Sir Benjamin and his uncle this morning—why, Maria, do you always leave our little parties?

"*Mar.* I own, madam, I have no pleasure in their conversation. I have myself no gratification in uttering detraction, and therefore none in hearing it.

"*Lady S.* Oh, fie! you are serious—'tis only a little harmless raillery.

"*Mar.* I never can think that harmless which hurts the peace of youth, draws tears from beauty, and gives many a pang to the innocent.

"*Lady S.* Nay, you must allow that many people of sense and wit have this foible—Sir Benjamin Backbite, for instance.

"*Mar.* He may, but I confess I never can perceive wit where I see malice.

"*Lady S.* Fie, Maria! you have the most unpolished way of thinking! It is absolutely impossible to be witty without being a little ill-natured. The malice of a good thing is the barb that makes it stick. I protest now when I say an ill-natured thing, I have not the least malice against the person; and, indeed, it may be of one whom I never saw in my life; for I hate to abuse a friend—but I take it for granted, they all speak as ill-naturedly of me.

"*Mar.* Then you are, very probably, conscious you deserve it—for my part, I shall only suppose myself ill-spoken of, when I am conscious I deserve it.

"*Enter Servant.*

"*Ser.* Mrs. Candour.

"*Mar.* Well, I'll leave you.

"*Lady S.* No, no, you have no reason to avoid her, she is good nature itself.

"*Mar.* Yes, with an artful affectation of candour, she does more injury than the worst backbiter of them all.

"*Enter* MRS. CANDOUR.

"*Mrs. Cand.* So, Lady Sneerwell, how d'ye do? Maria, child, how dost? Well, who is't you are to marry at last? Sir Benjamin or Clerimont. The town talks of nothing else."

Through the remainder of this scene the only difference in the speeches of Mrs. Candour is, that they abound more than at present in ludicrous names and anecdotes, and occasionally straggle into that loose wordiness, which, knowing how much it weakens the sap of wit, the good taste of Sheridan was always sure to lop away. The same may be said of the greater part of that scene of scandal, which at present occurs in the second act, and in which all that is now spoken by Lady Teazle, was originally put into the mouths of Sir Christopher Crab and others—the caustic remarks of Sir Peter Teazle being, as well as himself, an after creation.

It is chiefly, however, in Clerimont, the embryo of Charles Surface, that we perceive how imperfect may be the first lineaments that Time and Taste contrive to mould gradually into beauty. The following is the scene that introduces him to the audience, and no one ought to be disheartened by the failure of a first attempt after reading it. The spiritless language—the awkward introduction of the sister into the plot—the antiquated expedient* of dropping the letter—all, in short, is of the most undramatic and most unpromising description, and as little like what it afterwards turned to as the block is to the statue, or the grub to the butterfly.

"*Sir C.* This Clerimont is, to be sure, the drollest mortal! he is one of your moral fellows, who does unto others as he would they should do unto him.

"*Lady Sneer.* Yet he is sometimes entertaining.

"*Sir C.* Oh, hang him! no—he has too much good nature to say a witty thing himself, and is too ill-natured to praise wit in others.

* This objection seems to have occurred to himself; for one of his memorandums is—"Not to drop the letter, but take it from the maid."

"*Enter* CLERIMONT.

"*Sir B.* So, Clerimont—we were just wishing for you to enliven us with your wit and agreeable vein.

"*Cler.* No, Sir Benjamin, I cannot join you.

"*Sir B.* Why, man, you look as grave as a young lover the first time he is jilted.

"*Cler.* I have some cause to be grave, Sir Benjamin. A word with you all. I have just received a letter from the country, in which I understand that my sister has suddenly left my uncle's house, and has not since been heard of.

"*Lady S.* Indeed! and on what provocation?

"*Cler.* It seems they were urging her a little too hastily to marry some country squire that was not to her taste.

"*Sir B.* Positively I love her for her spirit.

"*Lady S.* And so do I, and would protect her, if I knew where she was.

"*Cler.* Sir Benjamin, a word with you—(*takes him apart*). I think, sir, we have lived for some years on what the world calls the footing of friends.

"*Sir B.* To my great honour, sir.—Well, my dear friend?

"*Cler.* You know that you once paid your addresses to my sister. My uncle disliked you; but I have reason to think you were not indifferent to her.

"*Sir B.* I believe you are pretty right there; but what follows?

"*Cler.* Then I think I have a right to expect an implicit answer from you, whether you are in any respect privy to her elopement?

"*Sir B.* Why, you certainly have a right to ask the question, and I will answer you as sincerely—which is, that though I make no doubt but that she would have gone with me to the world's end, I am at present entirely ignorant of the whole affair. This I declare to you upon my honour—and, what is more, I assure you my devotions are at present paid to another lady—one of your acquaintance, too.

"*Cler.* (*aside*). Now, who can this other be whom he alludes to?—I have sometimes thought I perceived a kind of mystery between him and Maria—but I rely on her promise, though, of late, her conduct to me has been strangely reserved.

"*Lady S.* Why, Clerimont, you seem quite thoughtful. Come with us; we are going to kill an hour at ombre—your mistress will join us?

"*Cler.* Madam, I attend you.

"*Lady S.* (*taking Sir B. aside*). Sir Benjamin, I see Maria is now coming to join us—do you detain her awhile, and I will contrive that Clerimont should see you, and then drop this letter. [*Exeunt all but Sir B.*

"*Enter* MARIA.

"*Mar.* I thought the company were here, and Clerimont——

"*Sir B.* One, more your slave than Clerimont, is here.

"*Mar.* Dear Sir Benjamin, I thought you promised me to drop this subject. If I have really any power over you, you will oblige me——

"*Sir B.* Power over me! What is there you could not command me in? Have you not wrought on me to proffer my love to Lady Sneerwell? Yet though you gain this from me, you will not give me the smallest token of gratitude.

"*Enter* CLERIMONT *behind.*

"*Mar.* How can I believe your love sincere, when you continue still to importune me.

"*Sir B.* I ask but for your friendship, your esteem.

"*Mar.* That you shall ever be entitled to—then I may depend upon your honour?

"*Sir B.* Eternally—dispose of my heart as you please.

"*Mar.* Depend upon it I shall study nothing but its happiness. I need not repeat my caution as to Clerimont?

"*Sir B.* No, no, he suspects nothing as yet.

"*Mar.* For, within these few days, I almost believed that he suspects me.

"*Sir B.* Never fear, he does not love well enough to be quick-sighted; for just now he taxed me with eloping with his sister.

"*Mar.* Well, we had now best join the company. [*Exeunt.*

"*Cler.* So, now—who can ever have faith in woman? D—d deceitful wanton! why did she not fairly tell me that she was weary of my addresses? that woman, like her mind, was changed, and another fool succeeded.

"*Enter* LADY SNEERWELL.

"*Lady S.* Clerimont, why do you leave us? Think of my losing this hand. (*Cler.* She has no heart!)—Five mate—(*Cler.* Deceitful wanton!)—spadille.

"*Cler.* Oh yes, ma'am—'twas very hard.

"*Lady S.* But you seem disturbed; and where are Maria and Sir Benjamin? I vow I shall be jealous of Sir Benjamin.

"*Cler.* I dare swear they are together very happy,—but,

Lady Sneerwell—you may perhaps often have perceived that I am discontented with Maria. I ask you to tell me sincerely—have you ever perceived it?

"*Lady S.* I wish you would excuse me.

"*Cler.* Nay, you have perceived it—I know you hate deceit." * * * * * * * * * *

In the other sketch, Sir Peter and Lady Teazle are made the leading personages. The two plans are entirely distinct. Lady Sneerwell and her associates being as wholly excluded from the one, as Sir Peter and Lady Teazle are from the other; so that it is difficult to say, with certainty, which existed first, or at what time the happy thought occurred of blending all that was best in each into one.

The following are the Dramatis Personæ of the second plan:—

Sir Rowland Harpur.
—— Plausible.
Capt. Harry Plausible.
Freeman.
Old Teazle.* (*Left off trade.*)

Mrs. Teazle.
Maria.

From this list of the personages we may conclude that the quarrels of Old Teazle and his wife, the attachment between Maria and one of the Plausibles, and the intrigue of Mrs. Teazle with the other, formed the sole materials of the piece, as then constructed.† There is reason, too, to believe, from

* The first intention was, as appears from his introductory speech, to give Old Teazle the Christian name of Solomon. Sheridan was, indeed, most fastidiously changeful in his names. The present Charles Surface was at first Clerimont, then Florival, then Captain Harry Plausible, then Harry Pliant or Pliable, then Young Harrier, and then Frank—while his elder brother was successively Plausible, Pliable, Young Pliant, Tom, and, lastly, Joseph Surface. Trip was originally called Spunge; the name of Snake was, in the earlier sketch, Spatter, and, even after the union of the two plots into one, all the business of the opening scene with Lady Sneerwell, at present transacted by Snake, was given to a character, afterwards wholly omitted, Miss Verjuice.

† This was most probably the "Two-act comedy," which he announced to Mr. Linley as preparing for representation in 1775.

the following memorandum, which occurs in various shapes through these manuscripts, that the device of the screen was not yet thought of, and that the discovery was to be effected in a very different manner:—

"Making love to aunt and niece—meeting wrong in the dark—some one coming—locks up the aunt, thinking it to be the niece."

The following scene from the second sketch shows, perhaps, even more strikingly than the other, the volatilizing and condensing process which his wit must have gone through, before it attained its present proof and flavour.

"ACT I.—SCENE I.

"OLD TEAZLE, *alone.*

"In the year '44 I married my first wife; the wedding was at the end of the year—ay, 'twas in December; yet, before Ann. Dom. '45, I repented. A month before, we swore we preferred each other to the whole world—perhaps we spoke truth; but, when we came to promise to love each other till death, there I am sure we lied. Well, Fortune owed me a good turn; in '48 she died. Ah, silly Solomon, in '52 I find thee married again! Here, too, is a catalogue of ills—Thomas, born February 12; Jane, born Jan. 6; so they go on to the number of five. However, by death I stand credited but by one. Well, Margery, rest her soul! was a queer creature; when she was gone, I felt awkward at first, and being sensible that wishes availed nothing, I often wished for her return. For ten years more I kept my senses and lived single. Oh, blockhead, dolt Solomon! Within this twelvemonth thou art married again—married to a woman thirty years younger than thyself; a fashionable woman. Yet I took her with caution; she had been educated in the country; but now she has more extravagance than the daughter of an earl, more levity than a countess. What a defect it is in our laws, that a man who has once been branded in the forehead should be hanged for the second offence.

"*Enter* JARVIS.

"*Teaz.* Who's there? Well, Jarvis?

"*Jarv.* Sir, there are a number of my mistress's tradesmen without, clamorous for their money.

"*Teaz.* Are those their bills in your hand?

"*Jarv.* Something about a twentieth part, sir.

"*Teaz.* What! have you expended the hundred pounds I gave you for her use?

"*Jarv.* Long ago, sir, as you may judge by some of the items:—'Paid the coachmaker for lowering the front seat of the coach.'

"*Teaz.* What the deuce was the matter with the seat?

"*Jarv.* Oh, Lord, the carriage was too low for her by a foot when she was dressed—so that it must have been so, or have had a tub at top like a hat-case on a travelling trunk. Well, sir (*reads*), 'Paid her two footmen half a year's wages, £50.'

"*Teaz.* 'Sdeath and fury! does she give her footmen a hundred a year?

"*Jarv.* Yes, sir, and I think, indeed, she has rather made a good bargain, for they find their own bags and bouquets.

"*Teaz.* Bags and bouquets for footmen!—halters and bastinadoes![*]

"*Jarv.* 'Paid for my lady's own nosegays, £50.'

"*Teaz.* Fifty pounds for flowers! enough to turn the Pantheon into a green-house, and give a fête champêtre at Christmas.

"*Lady Teaz.*† Lord, Sir Peter, I wonder you should grudge me the most innocent articles in dress—and then, for the expense—flowers cannot be cheaper in winter—you should find fault with the climate, and not with me. I am sure I wish with all

[*] Transferred afterwards to Trip and Sir Oliver.

† We observe here a change in his plan, with respect both to the titles of Old Teazle and his wife, and the presence of the latter during this scene, which was evidently not at first intended.

From the following skeleton of the scenes of this piece, it would appear that (inconsistently, in some degree, with my notion of its being the two-act comedy announced in 1775) he had an idea of extending the plot through five acts.

"Act 1st, scene 1st, Sir Peter and Steward—2nd, Sir P. and Lady—then Young Pliable.

"Act 2nd, Sir P. and Lady—Young Harrier—Sir P., and Sir Rowland, and Old Jeremy—Sir R. and Daughter—Y. P. and Y. H.

"Act 3rd, Sir R., Sir P., and O. J.—2nd, Y. P. and company, Y. R. O. R.—3rd, Y. H. and Maria—Y. O. R. H., and Young Harrier, to borrow.

"Act 4th, Y. P. and Maria, to borrow his money; gets away what he had received from his uncle—Y. P., Old Jer., and tradesmen—P. and Lady T.," &c., &c

my heart that it was spring all the year round, and roses grew under one's feet.

"*Sir P.* Nay, but, madam, then you would not wear them; but try snowballs, and icicles. But tell me, madam, how can you feel any satisfaction in wearing these, when you might reflect that one of the rosebuds would have furnished a poor family with a dinner?

"*Lady T.* Upon my word, Sir Peter, begging your pardon, that is a very absurd way of arguing. By that rule, why do you indulge in the least superfluity? I dare swear a beggar might dine tolerably on your great-coat, or sup off your laced waistcoat—nay, I dare say he wouldn't eat your gold-headed cane in a week. Indeed, if you would reserve nothing but necessaries, you should give the first poor man you meet your wig, and walk the streets in your night-cap, which, you know, becomes you very much.

"*Sir P.* Well, go on to the articles.

"*Jarv.* (*reading*). 'Fruit for my lady's monkey, £5 per week.'

"*Sir P.* Five pounds for the monkey!—why 'tis a dessert for an alderman!

"*Lady T.* Why, Sir Peter, would you starve the poor animal? I dare swear he lives as reasonably as other monkeys do.

"*Sir P.* Well, well, go on.

"*Jarv.* 'China for ditto—'

"*Sir P.* What, does he eat out of china?

"*Lady T.* Repairing china that he breaks—and I am sure no monkey breaks less.

"*Jarv.* 'Paid Mr. Warren for perfumes—milk of roses, £30.'

"*Lady T.* Very reasonable.

"*Sir P.* 'Sdeath, madam, if you had been born to these expenses I should not have been so much amazed; but I took you, madam, an honest country squire's daughter—

"*Lady T.* Oh, filthy! don't name it. Well, heaven forgive my mother, but I do believe my father must have been a man of quality.

"*Sir P.* Yes, madam, when first I saw you, you were drest in a pretty-figured linen gown, with a bunch of keys by your side; your occupations, madam, to superintend the poultry; your accomplishments, a complete knowledge of the family receipt-book—then you sat in a room hung round with fruit in worsted of your own working; your amusements were to play

country dances on an old spinet to your father while he went asleep after a fox-chase—to read 'Tillotson's Sermons' to your aunt Deborah. These, madam, were your recreations, and these the accomplishments that captivated me. Now, forsooth, you must have two footmen to your chair, and a pair of white dogs in a phaeton; you forget when you used to ride double behind the butler on a docked bay coach-horse. . . . . Now you must have a French hairdresser; do you think you did not look as well when you had your hair combed smooth over a roller? . . . . . Then you could be content to sit with me, or walk by the side of the ha-ha.

"*Lady T.* True, I did; and, when you asked me if I could love an old fellow, who would deny me nothing, I simpered and said, 'Till death.'

"*Sir P.* Why did you say so?

"*Lady T.* Shall I tell you the truth?

"*Sir P.* If it is not too great a favour.

"*Lady T.* Why, then the truth is I was heartily tired of all these agreeable recreations you have so well remembered, and having a spirit to spend and enjoy fortune, I was determined to marry the first fool I should meet with . . . . . you made me a wife, for which I am much obliged to you, and if you have a wish to make me more grateful still, make me a widow.*

* * * * * *

"*Sir P.* Then, you never had a desire to please me, or add to my happiness?

"*Lady T.* Sincerely, I never thought about you; did you imagine that age was catching? I think you have been overpaid for all you could bestow on me. Here am I surrounded by half a hundred lovers, not one of whom but would buy a single smile by a thousand such baubles as you grudge me.

"*Sir P.* Then you wish me dead?

"*Lady T.* You know I do not, for you have made no settlement on me.

* * * * * *

"*Sir P.* I am but middle-aged.

"*Lady T.* There's the misfortune; put yourself on, or back, twenty years, and either way I should like you the better.

* * * * * *

Yes, sir, and then your behaviour too was different; you would dress, and smile, and bow; fly to fetch me anything I wanted;

* The speeches which are omitted consist merely of repetitions of the same thoughts, with but very little variation of the language.

praise everything I did or said; fatigue your stiff face with an eternal grin; nay, you even committed poetry, and muffled your harsh tones into a lover's whisper to sing it yourself, so that even my mother said you were the smartest old bachelor she ever saw—a billet-doux engrossed on buckram!!!!!!*

* * * * * *

Let girls take my advice and never marry an old bachelor. He must be so either because he could find nothing to love in women, or because women could find nothing to love in him."

The greater part of this dialogue is evidently *experimental*, and the play of repartee protracted with no other view, than to take the chance of a trump of wit or humour turning up.

In comparing the two characters in this sketch with what they are at present, it is impossible not to be struck by the signal change that they have undergone. The transformation of Sir Peter into a gentleman has refined, without weakening, the ridicule of his situation; and there is an interest created by the respectability and amiableness of his sentiments, which, contrary to the effect produced in general by elderly gentlemen so circumstanced, makes us rejoice, at the end, that he has his young wife all to himself. The improvement in the character of Lady Teazle is still more marked and successful. Instead of an ill-bred young shrew, whose readiness to do wrong leaves the mind in but little uncertainty as to her fate, we have a lively and innocent, though imprudent country girl, transplanted into the midst of all that can bewilder and endanger her, but with still enough of the purity of rural life about her heart, to keep the blight of the world from settling upon it permanently.

There is, indeed, in the original draught a degree of glare and coarseness, which proves the eye of the artist to have been fresh from the study of Wycherly and Vanbrugh; and this want of delicacy is particularly observable in the subsequent scene between Lady Teazle and Surface—the chastening down of which to its present tone is not the least of those triumphs

* These notes of admiration are in the original, and seem meant to express the surprise of the author at the extravagance of his own joke.

of taste and skill which every step in the elaboration of this fine comedy exhibits.'

"*Scene**—YOUNG PLIANT'S *Room.*

"*Young P.* I wonder her ladyship is not here; she promised me to call this morning. I have a hard game to play here, to pursue my designs on Maria. I have brought myself into a scrape with the mother-in-law. However, I think we have taken care to ruin my brother's character with my uncle, should he come to-morrow. Frank has not an ill quality in his nature; yet, a neglect of forms, and of the opinion of the world, has hurt him in the estimation of all his graver friends. I have profited by his errors, and contrived to gain a character, which now serves me as a mask to lie under.

"*Enter* LADY TEAZLE.

"*Lady T.* What, musing, or thinking of me?

"*Young P.* I was thinking unkindly of you; do you know, now, that you must repay me for this delay, or I must be coaxed into good humour?

"*Lady T.* Nay, in faith you should pity me—this old curmudgeon of late is grown so jealous, that I dare scarce go out, till I know he is secure for some time.

"*Young P.* I am afraid the insinuations we have had spread about Frank have operated too strongly on him—we meant only to direct his suspicions to a wrong object.

"*Lady T.* Oh, hang him! I have told him plainly that if he continues to be so suspicious, I'll leave him entirely, and make him allow me a separate maintenance.

"*Young P.* But, my charmer, if ever that should be the case, you see before you the man who will ever be attached to you. But you must not let matters come to extremities; you can never be revenged so well by leaving him, as by living with him, and let my sincere affection make amends for his brutality.

"*Lady T.* But how shall I be sure now that you are sincere? I have sometimes suspected that you loved my niece.

"*Young P.* Oh, hang her! a puling idiot, without sense or spirit.

* The third of the fourth act in the present form of the comedy. This scene underwent many changes afterwards, and was oftener put back into the crucible than any other part of the play.

"*Lady T.* But what proofs have I of your love to me, for I have still so much of my country prejudices left, that if I were to do a foolish thing (and I think I can't promise), it shall be for a man who would risk everything for me alone. How shall I be sure you love me?

"*Young P.* I have dreamed of you every night this week past.

"*Lady T.* That's a sign you have slept every night for this week past; for my part, I would not give a pin for a lover who could not wake for a month in absence.

"*Young P.* I have written verses on you out of number.

"*Lady T.* I never saw any.

"*Young P.* No—they did not please me, and so I tore them.

"*Lady T.* Then it seems you wrote them only to divert yourself.

"*Young P.* Am I doomed for ever to suspense?

"*Lady T.* I don't know—if I was convinced——

"*Young P.* Then let me on my knees——

"*Lady T.* Nay, nay, I will have no raptures either. This much I can tell you, that if I am to be seduced to do wrong, I am not to be taken by storm, but by deliberate capitulation, and that only where my reason or my heart is convinced.

"*Young P.* Then, to say it at once—the world gives itself liberties——

"*Lady T.* Nay, I am sure without cause; for I am as yet unconscious of any ill, though I know not what I may be forced to.

"*Young P.* The fact is, my dear Lady Teazle, that your extreme innocence is the very cause of your danger; it is the integrity of your heart that makes you run into a thousand imprudences which a full consciousness of error would make you guard against. Now, in that case, you can't conceive how much more circumspect you would be.

"*Lady T.* Do you think so?

"*Young P.* Most certainly. Your character is like a person in a plethora, absolutely dying of too much health.

"*Lady T.* So, then, you would have me sin in my own defence, and part with my virtue to preserve my reputation.

"*Young P.* Exactly so, upon my credit, ma'am."

* * * * * *

It will be observed that much of the original material is still

preserved throughout, but that, like the ivory melting in the hands of Pygmalion, it has lost all its first rigidity and roughness, and, assuming at every touch some variety of aspect, seems to have gained new grace by every change.

In respect of mere style, too, the workmanship of so pure a writer of English as Sheridan is well worth the attention of all who would learn the difficult art of combining ease with polish, and being, at the same time, idiomatic and elegant. There is not a page of these manuscripts that does not bear testimony to the fastidious care with which he selected, arranged, and moulded his language, so as to form it into that transparent channel of his thoughts, which it is at present.

His chief objects in correcting were to condense and simplify—to get rid of all unnecessary phrases and epithets, and, in short, to strip away from the thyrsus of his wit every leaf that could render it less light and portable.

The specimen which Sir Benjamin Backbite gives of his poetical talents was taken, it will be seen, from the following verses, which were found in Mr. Sheridan's handwriting—one of those trifles, perhaps, with which he and his friend Tickell were in the constant habit of amusing themselves, and written apparently with the intention of ridiculing some woman of fashion :—

"Then, behind, all my hair is done up in a plat,
And so, like a cornet's, tuck'd under my hat.
Then I mount on my palfrey as gay as a lark,
And, follow'd by John, take the dust* in High Park.
In the way I am met by some smart macaroni,
Who rides by my side on a little bay pony—
No sturdy Hibernian, with shoulders so wide,
But as taper and slim as the ponies they ride;
Their legs are as slim, and their shoulders no wider,
Dear sweet little creatures, both pony and rider.

But sometimes, when hotter, I order my chaise,
And manage, myself, my two little greys.

* This phrase is made use of in the dialogue :—"As Lady Betty Curricle was taking the dust in Hyde Park."

Sure never were seen two such sweet little ponies,
Other horses are clowns, and these macaronies,
And to give them this title, I'm sure isn't wrong,
Their legs are so slim, and their tails are so long.
In Kensington Gardens to stroll up and down,
You know was the fashion before you left town,—
The thing's well enough, when allowance is made
For the size of the trees and the depth of the shade,
But the spread of their leaves such a shelter affords
To those noisy, impertinent creatures call'd birds,
Whose ridiculous chirruping ruins the scene,
Brings the country before me, and gives me the spleen.

Yet, tho' 'tis too rural—to come near the mark,
We all herd in *one* walk, and that nearest the Park;
There with ease we may see, as we pass by the wicket,
The chimneys of Knightsbridge and—footmen at cricket.
I must tho', in justice, declare that the grass,
Which, worn by our feet, is diminish'd apace,
In a little time more will be brown and as flat
As the sand at Vauxhall or as Ranelagh mat.
Improving thus fast, perhaps, by degrees,
We may see rolls and butter spread under the trees,
With a small pretty band in each seat of the walk,
To play little tunes and enliven our talk."

Though Mr. Sheridan appears to have made more easy progress after he had incorporated his two first plots into one, yet, even in the details of the new plan, considerable alterations were subsequently made—whole scenes suppressed or transposed, and the dialogue of some entirely re-written.

It was his fate through life—and, in a great degree his policy—to gain credit for excessive indolence and carelessness, while few persons, with so much natural brilliancy of talents, ever employed more art and circumspection in their display. This was the case, remarkably, in the instance before us. Notwithstanding the labour which he bestowed upon this comedy (or, perhaps, in consequence of that labour) the first representation of the piece was announced before the whole of the copy was in the hands of the actors. The manuscript, indeed, of the five

last scenes bears evident marks of this haste in finishing—there being but one rough draught of them, scribbled upon detached pieces of paper; while, of all the preceding acts, there are numerous transcripts, scattered promiscuously through six or seven books, with new interlineations and memorandums to each. On the last leaf of all, which exists just as we may suppose it to have been despatched by him to the copyist, there is the following curious specimen of doxology, written hastily, in the hand-writing of the respective parties, at the bottom :—

"Finished at last, thank God!

"R. B. SHERIDAN.

"Amen!

"W. HOPKINS."*

The success of such a play could not be doubtful. Long after its first uninterrupted run, it continued to be played regularly two or three times a week; and a comparison of the receipts of the first twelve nights, with those of a later period, will show how little the attraction of the piece had abated by repetition :—

May 8th, 1777.	£	s.	d.	
School for Scandal	225	9	0	
Ditto	195	6	0	
Ditto A. B. (Author's night) ...	73	10	0	(Expenses)
Ditto	257	4	6	
Ditto	243	0	0	
Ditto A. B.	73	10	0	
Committee	65	6	6	
School for Scandal	262	19	6	
Ditto	263	13	6	
Ditto A. B.	73	10	0	
Ditto K. (the King)	272	9	6	
Ditto	247	15	0	
Ditto	255	14	0	

The following extracts are taken at hazard from an account

* The prompter.

of the weekly receipts of the theatre, for the year 1778, kept with exemplary neatness and care by Mrs. Sheridan herself:—

1778.			£	s.	d.
Jan. 3.	Twelfth Night ...	... Queen Mab ...	139	14	6
5.	Macbeth ...	... Queen Mab ...	212	19	0
6.	Tempest ...	... Queen Mab ...	107	15	6
7.	School for Scandal	... Comus... ...	292	16	0
8.	School for Fathers	... Queen Mab ...	181	10	6
9.	School for Scandal	... Padlock ...	281	6	0
Mar. 14.	School for Scandal	... Deserter ...	263	18	6
16.	Venice Preserved	... Balphegor (New)	195	3	6
17.	Hamlet ...	... Balphegor ...	160	19	0
19.	School for Scandal	... Balphegor ...	261	10	0

Such, indeed, was the predominant attraction of this comedy during the two years subsequent to its first appearance, that, in the official account of receipts for 1779, we find the following remark subjoined by the treasurer:—"School for Scandal damped the new pieces." It was played with the same unequivocal marks of success through the years 1780 and 1781, the nights of its representation always rivalling those on which the king went to the theatre in the magnitude of their receipts.*

In the year 1778, Mr. Sheridan purchased Mr. Lacy's moiety of the theatre for £45,000, and among the visible signs of his

* Great as the success of this piece was on its first reception, what would be the thoughts of the author, if he knew that a short time before this book went to press, it had been played at the Vaudeville Theatre, for 404 consecutive nights? The following was the original cast at this theatre:—

Sir Peter	... Mr. W. Farren	Trip ...	... Mr. Vaughan
Sir Oliver	... Mr. Horace Wigan	Snake ...	... Mr. Mercer
Charles	... Mr. H. Neville	Careless	... Mr. H. Crellin
Joseph	... Mr. J. Clayton	Sir Harry	... Mr. Elton
Crabtree	... Mr. Thos. Thorne	Lady Teazle	... Miss Fawcitt
Sir Benjamin...	Mr. David James	Maria ...	... Miss Marie Rhodes
Rowley	... Mr. Roberts	Lady Sneerwell	Miss S. Rignold
Moses...	... Mr. Nye Chart	Mrs. Candour	... Miss Oliver

Only three persons (Miss M. Oliver, Mr. Farren, and Mr. Roberts) played throughout the run; but the most important change was in the part of "Charles," which for the final thirty-six nights was played by Mr. Charles Warner, one of the most promising light comedians now on the stage.

increased influence in the affairs of the theatre, was the appointment of his father to be manager—a reconciliation having taken place between them.

One of the novelties of the year was a musical entertainment called "The Camp," which was falsely attributed to Mr. Sheridan at the time. This unworthy trifle (as appears from a rough copy of it) was the production of Tickell, and the patience with which his friend submitted to the imputation of having written it, was a sort of "martyrdom of fame" which few but himself could afford.

At the beginning of the year 1779 Garrick died, and Sheridan, as chief mourner, followed him to the grave. He also wrote a monody to his memory, which was delivered by Mrs. Yates, after the play of "The West Indian," in the month of March following. During the interment of Garrick in Poet's Corner, Mr. Burke had remarked that the statue of Shakspeare seemed to point to the grave where the great actor of his works was laid. This hint did not fall idly on the ear of Sheridan, as the following *fixation* of the thought, in the verses which he afterwards wrote, proved :—

> "The throng that mourn'd as their dead favourite pass'd,
> The grac'd respect that claim'd him to the last ;
> While Shakspeare's image, from its hallow'd base,
> Seem'd to prescribe the grave and point the place."

It was in the course of this same year that he produced the entertainment of "The Critic"—his last legitimate offering on the shrine of the Dramatic Muse. The plan of a Rehearsal was first adopted, for the purpose of ridiculing Dryden, by the Duke of Buckingham.

Fielding tried the same plan in a variety of pieces—in his Pasquin, his Historical Register, his Author's Farce, his Eurydice, &c.,—but without much success, except in the comedy of Pasquin, which had at first a prosperous career, though it has since, except with the few that still read it for its fine tone of pleasantry, fallen into oblivion. It was reserved for Sheridan

to give vitality to this form of dramatic humour, and to invest even his satirical portraits—as in the instance of Sir Fretful Plagiary, which, it is well known, was designed for Cumberland—with a generic character, which, without weakening the particular resemblance, makes them representatives for ever of the whole class to which the original belonged.

We must now prepare to follow the subject of this memoir into a field of display, altogether different, where he was in turn to become an actor before the public himself, and where, instead of inditing lively speeches for others, he was to deliver the dictates of his eloquence and wit from his own lips.

His powers of conversation and his delight in social pleasures brought him into terms of intimacy with many prominent members of the Whig ministry. Through Lord John Townsend he became acquainted with Mr. Fox, who declared him to be the wittiest man he had ever known. An introduction to Burke soon followed, and he became one of the most welcome visitors at Devonshire House. At Brooks's Club-house, where the Whig politicians blended conviviality with business, he soon shone pre-eminent among the hardest drinkers and wittiest talkers. He joined the party, and, with a few exceptions, was faithful to its creed and leaders through life. After performing some minor services to his party, he was sent to the House of Commons as member for the borough of Stafford, in October, 1780. The nation was suffering under the calamities of the American War, and Lord North's administration was assailed by every weapon of argument and invective.

He made his first speech in Parliament on the 20th of November, 1780, when a petition was presented to the House, complaining of the undue election of the sitting members (himself and Mr. Monckton) for Stafford. It was rather lucky for him that the occasion was one in which he felt personally interested, as it took away much of that appearance of anxiety for display, which might have attended his first exhibition upon any general subject. The fame, however, which he had already acquired by his literary talents, was sufficient, even on this

question, to awaken all the curiosity and expectation of his audience; and accordingly we are told in the report of his speech, that "he was heard with particular attention, the House being uncommonly still while he was speaking." The indignation, which he expressed on this occasion at the charges brought by the petition against the electors of Stafford, was coolly turned into ridicule by Mr. Rigby, Paymaster of the Forces. But Mr. Fox, whose eloquence was always ready at the call of good nature, and, like the shield of Ajax, had "ample room and verge enough," to protect not only himself but his friends, came promptly to the aid of the young orator; and, in reply to Mr. Rigby, observed, that "though those ministerial members, who chiefly robbed and plundered their constituents, might afterwards affect to despise them, yet gentlemen, who felt properly the nature of the trust allotted to them, would always treat them and speak of them with respect."

It was on this night, as Woodfall used to relate, that Mr. Sheridan, after he had spoken, came up to him in the gallery, and asked, with much anxiety, what he thought of his first attempt. The answer of Woodfall, as he had the courage afterwards to own, was, "I am sorry to say I do not think that this is your line—you had much better have stuck to your former pursuits." On hearing which, Sheridan rested his head upon his hand for a few minutes, and then vehemently exclaimed, "It is in me, however, and, by G—, it shall come out."

During the first few years of his political life, Sheridan produced but small impression, but he was steadily making his way into notoriety. On the overthrow of Lord North's ministry in the month of March, 1782, an entirely new administration was formed under the promising auspices of the Marquis of Rockingham.

Mr. Sheridan, as might be expected, shared in the triumph of his party, by being appointed one of the Under-Secretaries of State. This office he occupied but four months. The

death of the Marquis broke up this short-lived ministry, and split the party into two divisions. Lord Shelbourne was appointed prime minister, and Fox, Burke, and the other old Whigs resigned, and went into opposition.

In the new ministry Sheridan was made Secretary of the Treasury, but its fate was sealed when Mr. Fox's East India Bill was introduced. This bill passed the House of Commons, but was thrown out by the Lords; Fox was dismissed by the King, and Pitt was made prime minister. This was one of the most exciting periods in English political history, but its consideration belongs rather to the biography of Burke and Fox than of Sheridan. One of his happiest retorts occurred, however, in an early scene of this hurried drama during the debate on the Parliamentary Articles of Peace.

"Mr. Pitt (say the Parliamentary Reports) was pointedly severe on the gentlemen who had spoken against the Address, and particularly on Mr. Sheridan. 'No man admired more than he did the abilities of that Right Honourable Gentleman, the elegant sallies of his thought, the gay effusions of his fancy, his dramatic turns and his epigrammatic point; and if they were reserved for the proper stage, they would, no doubt, receive what the Honourable Gentleman's abilities always did receive, the plaudits of the audience; and it would be his fortune '*sui plausu gaudere theatri.*' But this was not the proper scene for the exhibition of those elegancies.' Mr. Sheridan, in rising to explain, said that 'On the particular sort of personality which the Right Honourable Gentleman had thought proper to make use of, he need not make any comment. The propriety, the taste, the gentlemanly point of it, must have been obvious to the House. But,' said Mr. Sheridan, 'let me assure the Right Honourable Gentleman, that I do now, and will at any time he chooses to repeat this sort of allusion, meet it with the most sincere good-humour. Nay, I will say more—flattered and encouraged by the Right Honourable Gentleman's panegyric on my talents, if ever I again engage in the compositions he alludes to, I may be tempted to an act of presumption—to attempt an improvement on one of Ben Jonson's best characters, the character of the Angry Boy in the Alchemist.'"

Mr. Sheridan's connection with the stage, though one of the most permanent sources of his glory, was also a point upon which, at the commencement of his political career, his pride was most easily awakened and alarmed. He himself used to tell of the frequent mortifications which he had suffered, when at school, from taunting allusions to his father's profession—being called by some of his school-fellows "the player-boy," &c. Mr. Pitt had therefore selected the most sensitive spot for his sarcasm; and the good temper, as well as keenness, with which the thrust was returned, must have been felt even through all that pride of youth and talent in which the new Chancellor of the Exchequer was then enveloped. There could hardly, indeed, have been a much greater service rendered to a person in the situation of Mr. Sheridan, than thus affording him an opportunity of silencing, once for all, a battery to which this weak point of his pride was exposed, and by which he might otherwise have been kept in continual alarm. This gentleman-like retort, combined with the recollection of his duel, tended to place him for the future in perfect security against any indiscreet tamperings with his personal history.*

* The following *jeu d'esprit*, written by Sheridan himself upon this occurrence, was found among his manuscripts:—

"ADVERTISEMENT EXTRAORDINARY.

"We hear that, in consequence of a hint lately given in the House of Commons, the play of 'The Alchemist' is certainly to be performed by a set of gentlemen for our diversion, in a private apartment of Buckingham House.

"The characters, thus described in the old editions of Ben Jonson, are to be represented in the following manner—the old practice of men's playing the female parts being adopted:—

"SUBTLE (*the Alchemist*) - - -	Lord Sh—lb—e.
FACE (*the Housekeeper*) - - -	The Lord Ch—ll—r.
DOLL COMMON (*their Colleague*) - -	The L—d Adv—c—te.
DRUGGER (*a Tobacco-man*) - - -	Lord Eff—ng—m.
EPICURE MAMMON - - - -	Mr. R—gby.
TRIBULATION - - - - -	Dr. J—nk—s—n.
ANANIAS (*a little Pastor*) - - -	Mr. H—ll.
KASTRIL (*the Angry Boy*) - - -	Mr. W. P—tt.
DAME PLIANT - - - - -	Gen. C—nw—y.
and	
SURLY - - - - - - -	His ————."

In following Mr. Fox into opposition, Sheridan soon became one of his most efficient supporters. As a man of wit—of wit not only as a power of mind, but as a quality of character—he detected weak points in arguments, or follies in declamation, with an instinctive insight.

In the session of 1786, when the Duke of Richmond, who had gone over to the administration, brought forward his plan for the fortification of the dockyards, Sheridan subjected his report to a scorching speech. He complimented the duke for the proofs he had given of his genius as an engineer:—

"He had made his report," said Sheridan, "an argument of posts, and conducted his reasoning upon principles of trigonometry, as well as logic. There were certain detached data, like advanced works, to keep the enemy at a distance from the main object in debate. Strong provisions covered the flanks of his assertions. His very queries were in casemates. No, impression, therefore, was to be made on this fortress of sophistry by desultory observations; and it was necessary to sit down before it, and assail it by regular approaches. It was fortunate, however, to observe, that notwithstanding all the skill employed by the noble and literary engineer, his mode of defence on paper was open to the same objection which had been urged against his other fortifications; that if his adversary got possession of one of his posts, it became strength against him, and the means of subduing the whole line of his argument."

From 1780, the period of his entering Parliament, to 1787, Sheridan, though he had spoken often, had made no such exhibition of his powers as to gain the reputation of a great orator. But about this time the genius and energy of Burke started a subject which not only gave full expression to his own great nature, but afforded the orators of his party a rare occasion for the most dazzling displays of eloquence. I refer, of course, to the impeachment of Warren Hastings. In bringing forward in the House of Commons the various charges, the charge relating to the spoliation of the Begum princesses of Oude was allotted to Sheridan. The event was

such as to reward all his diligence. His speech was made on the 7th of February, 1787, and occupied five hours and a half in the delivery.

Mr. Burke declared it to be "the most astonishing effort of eloquence, argument, and wit united, of which there was any record or tradition." Mr. Fox said, "all that he had ever heard, all that he had ever read, when compared with it, dwindled into nothing, and vanished like vapour before the sun;"—and Mr. Pitt acknowledged "that it surpassed all the eloquence of ancient and modern times, and possessed everything that genius or art could furnish, to agitate and control the human mind."

There were several other tributes, of a less distinguished kind, of which I find the following account in the "Annual Register":—

"Sir William Dolben immediately moved an adjournment of the debate, confessing that, in the state of mind in which Mr. Sheridan's speech had left him, it was impossible for him to give a determinate opinion. Mr. Stanhope seconded the motion. When he had entered the House, he was not ashamed to acknowledge that his opinion inclined to the side of Mr. Hastings. But such had been the wonderful efficacy of Mr. Sheridan's convincing detail of facts and irresistible eloquence, that he could not but say his sentiments were materially changed. Nothing, indeed, but information almost equal to a miracle, could determine him not to vote for the Charge; but he had just felt the influence of such a miracle, and he could not but ardently desire to avoid an immediate decision. Mr. Matthew Montagu confessed that he had felt a similar revolution of sentiment."

The following anecdote is given as a proof of the irresistible power of this speech in a note upon Mr. Bissett's "History of the reign of George III.":—

"The late Mr. Logan, well known for his literary efforts, and author of a most masterly defence of Mr. Hastings, went that day to the House of Commons, prepossessed for the accused and against the accuser. At the expiration of the first hour he said to a friend, 'All this is declamatory assertion

without proof:'—when the second was finished, 'This is a most wonderful oration:'—at the close of the third, 'Mr. Hastings has acted very unjustifiably:'—the fourth, 'Mr. Hastings is a most atrocious criminal;'—and, at last, 'Of all monsters of iniquity, the most enormous is Warren Hastings!'"

The best report that has come down to us of this speech is given in another part of this volume.

The motion of Mr. Burke on the 10th of May, 1787, "That Warren Hastings, Esq., be impeached," having been carried without a division, Mr. Sheridan was appointed one of the Managers, "to make good the Articles" of the Impeachment, and, on the 3rd of June in the following year, brought forward the same charge in Westminster Hall which he had already enforced with such wonderful talent in the House of Commons.

This oration lasted four days and produced the greatest sensation, although it was considered by Fox and others to be inferior to the one delivered in the House of Commons.

In a letter to her sister-in-law, Mrs. Sheridan writes, "I have delayed writing till I could gratify myself and you by sending you the news of our dear Dick's triumph—of *our* triumph I may call it; for, surely, no one, in the slightest degree connected with him, but must feel proud and happy. It is impossible, my dear woman, to convey to you the delight, the astonishment, the adoration, he has excited in the breast of every class of people! Every party-prejudice has been overcome by a display of genius, eloquence, and goodness, which no one, with anything like a heart about them, could have listened to, without being the wiser and the better for the rest of their lives. What must *my* feelings be!—you only can imagine. To tell you the truth, it is with some difficulty that I can 'let down my mind,' as Mr. Burke said afterwards, to talk or think on any other subject. But pleasure too exquisite becomes pain, and I am at this moment suffering for the delightful anxieties of last week."

In the summer of the year 1788 the father of Mr. Sheridan

died. He had been recommended to try the air of Lisbon for his health, and had left Dublin for that purpose, accompanied by his younger daughter. But the rapid increase of his malady prevented him from proceeding farther than Margate, where he died about the beginning of August, attended in his last moments by his son Richard.

Up to this time Fox, Burke, and Sheridan were closely united, but the illness of the King brought a question before Parliament which, while it seemed to promise the accession of the Whigs to power, resulted only in sowing the seeds of dissension among their leaders. George the Third became insane, and it devolved upon the legislature to appoint a regent. Mr. Pitt was determined to restrict the prerogative of the prince who was naturally the person to be appointed, while the Whigs struggled to have him endowed with the full powers of majesty. A fierce war of words and principles was the result, in which Fox and Burke gave way to unwonted bursts of passion. Sheridan, who for a long time had been the companion of the Prince in his pleasures, and in some degree his agent in the House of Commons, was suspected of intriguing for a higher office than his station in the party would warrant; but the king's recovery put an end to the hopes of all. Soon after, the breaking out of the French Revolution gave occasion for the discontent in the party to explode. Burke, from the first, looked upon that portentous event with distrust; Fox and Sheridan hailed it as an omen of good.

The debate on the Army Estimates, in 1790, was the first public sign of the schism between the Whig leaders. Sheridan, in an animated but indiscreet speech, hastened the separation and brought down Burke's wrath upon his head, and a puplic disavowal of their friendship. The progress of the Revolution soon brought on the final division of the Whig party; most of its influential members sided with Burke, leaving Fox and Sheridan to do battle against their old enemies and a party of their old friends.

In the year 1792, after a long illness, Sheridan lost his beloved wife; she died at Bristol, in the thirty-eighth year of her age.

The domestic anxieties of Mr. Sheridan, during this year, left but little room in his mind for public cares. Accordingly, we find that, after the month of April he absented himself from the House of Commons altogether. He had also been for some time harassed by the derangement of his theatrical property, which was now fast falling into a state of arrear and involvement, from which it never after entirely recovered.

Although surrounded by private embarrassments, there is no portion of Sheridan's political life which is more honourable than his services to freedom during the stormy period between 1793 and 1801. His various speeches during this period display his usual brilliancy, with passages here and there of powerful declamation. In 1795 he married again. The lady was a Miss Ogle, daughter of the Dean of Winchester, and represented as young, accomplished, and thoroughly in love. Sheridan's power of fascination neither dissipation nor the reputation of a *roué* could weigh down. In 1801, when Pitt resigned, and the Addington ministry was formed, he gave that feeble government a kind of support. On the return of Pitt to power, he again went into opposition. Of all his later speeches, the most celebrated is the one made in 1805, on his motion for the repeal of the Defence Act. It was written during the debate, at a coffee-house, near Westminster, and was full of the fiercest attacks upon the premier. Pitt, commonly so insensible, is said to have writhed under its declamatory sarcasm, and many who were present thought they discerned at times, in his countenance, an intention to fix a personal quarrel upon his flashing adversary. After the death of Pitt, in 1806, and the formation of the Fox and Grenville ministry, Sheridan was appointed Treasurer of the Navy. The administration was dissolved after the death of Fox, owing to the determination of Lord Grenville to push the Catholic claims. Sheridan was against this

motion; he said that "he had heard of people knocking their brains out against a wall, but never before heard of any building a wall expressly for the purpose." On the night of the 24th of February, 1809, while the House of Commons was occupied with Mr. Ponsonby's motion on the conduct of the war in Spain, and Mr. Sheridan was in attendance, with the intention, no doubt, of speaking, the House was suddenly illuminated by a blaze of light; and, the debate being interrupted, it was ascertained that the theatre of Drury Lane was on fire. A motion was made to adjourn; but Mr. Sheridan said, with much calmness, that, "whatever might be the extent of the private calamity, he hoped it would not interfere with the public business of the country." He then left the House; and, proceeding to Drury Lane, witnessed with a fortitude which strongly interested all who observed him, the entire destruction of his property.*

In the month of July, this year, the installation of Lord Grenville as Chancellor of Oxford took place, and Mr. Sheridan was among the distinguished persons that attended the ceremony. As a number of honorary degrees were to be conferred on the occasion, it was expected, as a matter of course, that his name would be among those selected for that distinction; and, to the honour of the University, it was the general wish among its leading members that such a tribute should be paid to his high political character. On the proposal of his name, however (in a private meeting held previously to the convocation), the words "Non placet" were heard from two masters, one of whom, it is said, had no nobler motive for his opposition than that Sheridan did not pay his father's tithes very regularly. Several efforts were made to win over these dissentients; and the Rev. Mr. Ingram delivered an able and liberal Latin speech, in which he indignantly represented the

* It is said that, as he sat at the Piazza coffee-house, during the fire, taking some refreshment, a friend of his having remarked on the philosophic calmness with which he bore his misfortune, Sheridan answered, "A man may surely be allowed to take a glass of wine by his own fireside."

shame that it would bring on the University, if such a name as that of Sheridan should be "clam subductum" from the list. The two masters, however, were immovable; and nothing remained but to give Sheridan intimation of their intended opposition, so as to enable him to decline the honour of having his name proposed. On his appearance, afterwards, in the theatre, a burst of acclamation broke forth, with a general cry of, "Mr. Sheridan among the doctors—Sheridan among the doctors;" in compliance with which he was passed to the seat occupied by the honorary graduates, and sat, in unrobed distinction, among them, during the whole of the ceremonial. Few occurrences of a public nature ever gave him more pleasure than this reception.

At the close of the year 1810, the malady with which the king had been thrice before afflicted, returned; and, after the usual adjournments of Parliament, it was found necessary to establish a regency. On the question of the second adjournment, Mr. Sheridan took a line directly opposed to that of his party, and voted with the majority. That in this step he did not act from any previous concert with the prince appears from the following letter, addressed by him to his Royal Highness on the subject, and containing particulars which will prepare the mind of the reader to judge more clearly of the events that followed:—

"SIR,—

"I felt infinite satisfaction when I was apprised that your Royal Highness had been far from disapproving the line of conduct I had presumed to pursue, on the last question of adjournment in the House of Commons. Indeed, I never had a moment's doubt but that your Royal Highness would give me credit that I was actuated on that, as I shall on every other occasion through my existence, by no possible motive but the most sincere and unmixed desire to look to your Royal Highness's honour and true interest, as the objects of my political life—directed, as I am sure your efforts will ever be, to the essential interests of the country and the constitution. To this

line of conduct I am prompted by every motive of personal gratitude, and confirmed by every opportunity, which peculiar circumstances and long experience have afforded me, of judging of your heart and understanding—to the superior excellence of which (beyond all, I believe, that ever stood in your rank and high relation to society), I fear not to advance my humble testimony, because I scruple not to say for myself, that I am no flatterer, and that I never found that to *become* one was the road to your real regard.

"I state thus much because it has been under the influence of these feelings that I have not felt myself warranted (without any previous communication with your Royal Highness) to follow implicitly the dictates of others, in whom, however they may be my superiors in many qualities, I can subscribe to no superiority as to devoted attachment and duteous affection to your Royal Highness, or in that practical knowledge of the public mind and character, upon which alone must be built that popular and personal estimation of your Royal Highness, so necessary to your future happiness and glory, and to the prosperity of the nation you are destined to rule over.

"On these grounds, I saw no policy or consistency in unnecessarily giving a general sanction to the examination of the physicians before the Council, and then attempting, on the question of adjournment, to hold that examination as nought. On these grounds, I have ventured to doubt the wisdom or propriety of any endeavour (if any such endeavour has been made) to induce your Royal Highness, during so critical a moment, to stir an inch from the strong reserved post you had chosen, or give the slightest public demonstration of any future intended political preference; convinced as I was that the rule of conduct you had prescribed to yourself was precisely that which was gaining you the general heart, and rendering it impracticable for any quarter to succeed in annexing unworthy conditions to that most difficult situation which you were probably so soon to be called on to accept.

"I may, sir, have been guilty of error of judgment in both

these respects, differing, as I fear I have done, from those whom I am bound so highly to respect; but, at the same time, I deem it no presumption to say that, until better instructed, I feel a strong confidence in the justness of my own view of the subject; and simply because of *this*—I am sure that the decisions of that judgment, be they sound or mistaken, have not, at least, been rashly taken up, but were founded on deliberate zeal for your service and glory, unmixed, I will confidently say, with any one selfish object or political purpose of my own."

The same limitations and restrictions that Mr. Pitt proposed in 1789, were, upon the same principles, adopted by the present minister: nor did the opposition differ otherwise from their former line of argument, than by omitting altogether that claim of right for the prince, which Mr. Fox had, in the proceedings of 1789, asserted. To the surprise of the public (who expected, perhaps, rather than wished, that the coalesced party, of which Lord Grey and Lord Grenville were the chiefs, should succeed to power), Mr. Perceval and his colleagues were informed by the regent that it was his intention to continue them still in office.

The share taken by Sheridan in the transaction that led to this decision, is one of those passages of his political life upon which the criticism of his own party has been most severely exercised. As there exists, however, a paper drawn up by him, containing a satisfactory defence of his conduct on this occasion, I should ill discharge my duty towards his memory were I to deprive him of the advantage of a statement on which he appears to have relied so confidently for his vindication.

But, first, in order fully to understand the whole course of feelings and circumstances, by which not only Sheridan, but his royal master (for their cause is, in a great degree, identified), were, for some time past, predisposed towards the line of conduct which they now pursued, it will be necessary to recur to a few antecedent events.

By the death of Mr. Fox, the chief *personal* tie that connected the heir-apparent with the party of that statesman was broken. The *political* identity of the party itself had, even before that event, been, in a great degree, disturbed, by a coalition against which Sheridan had always most strongly protested, and to which the prince, there is every reason to believe, was by no means friendly. Immediately after the death of Mr. Fox, the prince made known his intentions of withdrawing from all personal interference in politics; and, though still continuing his sanction to the remaining ministry, expressed himself as no longer desirous of being considered a "party man."* During the short time that these ministers continued in office, the understanding between them and the prince was by no means of that cordial and confidential kind which had been invariably maintained during the lifetime of Mr. Fox. On the contrary, the impression on the mind of his Royal Highness, as well as on those of his immediate friends in the ministry, Lord Moira and Mr. Sheridan, was, that a cold neglect had succeeded to the confidence with which they had hitherto been treated; and that neither in their opinions nor feelings were they any longer sufficiently consulted or considered. The very measure by which the ministers ultimately lost their places, was, it appears, one of those which the prince neither conceived himself to have been sufficiently consulted upon before its adoption, nor approved of afterwards.

Such were the gradual loosenings of a bond which at no time had promised much permanence; and such the train of feelings and circumstances which (combining with certain prejudices in the royal mind against one of the chief leaders of the party) prepared the way for that result by which the

* This is the phrase used by the prince himself, in a letter addressed to a noble lord (not long after the dismissal of the Grenville ministry), for the purpose of vindicating his own character from some imputations cast upon it, in consequence of an interview which he had lately had with the king. This important exposition of the feelings of his Royal Highness, which, more than anything, throws light upon his subsequent conduct, was drawn up by Sheridan.

public was surprised in 1811, and the private details of which I shall now, as briefly as possible, relate.

As soon as the bill for regulating the office of regent had passed the two Houses, the prince, who, till then, had maintained a strict reserve with respect to his intentions, signified, through Mr. Adam, his pleasure that Lord Grenville should wait upon him. He then, in the most gracious manner, expressed to that noble lord his wish that he should, in conjunction with Lord Grey, prepare the answer which his Royal Highness was, in a few days, to return to the address of the Houses. The same confidential task was entrusted also to Lord Moira, with an expressed desire that he should consult with Lord Grey and Lord Grenville on the subject. But this co-operation, as I understand, was declined by them.

One of the embarrassing consequences of coalitions now appeared. The recorded opinions of Lord Grenville on the regency question differed wholly and in principle, not only from those of his coadjutor in this task, but from those of the prince himself, whose sentiments he was called upon to interpret. In this difficulty, the only alternative that remained was so to neutralize the terms of the answer upon the great point of difference, as to preserve the consistency of the royal speaker, without at the same time compromising that of his adviser. It required, of course, no small art and delicacy thus to throw into the shade that distinctive opinion of Whiggism, which Burke had clothed in his imperishable language in 1789, and which Fox had solemnly bequeathed to the part, when

> "in his upward flight
> He left his mantle there."*

The answer drawn up did not, it must be confessed, surmount this difficulty very skilfully. The assertion of the prince's consistency was confined to two meagre sentences, in the first of which his Royal Highness was made to say:—

* Joanna Baillie.

"With respect to the proposed limitation of the authority to be entrusted to me, I retain my former opinion:"—and in the other, the expression of any decided opinion upon the constitutional point is thus evaded:—"For such a purpose no restraint can be *necessary* to be imposed upon me." Somewhat less vague and evasive, however, was the justification of the opinion opposed to that of the prince, in the following sentence:—"That day, when I may restore to the king those powers which, *as belonging only to him*,* are in his name and in his behalf," &c., &c. This, it will be recollected, is precisely the doctrine which, on the great question of limiting the prerogative, Mr. Fox attributed to the Tories. In another passage, the Whig opinion of the prince was thus tamely surrendered:—"Conscious that, whatever *degree* of confidence you may *think fit* to repose in me," &c.†

The answer, thus constructed, was, by the two noble lords, transmitted to the prince, who, "strongly objecting" (as we are told) "to almost every part of it," acceded to the suggestion of Sheridan that a new form of answer should be immediately sketched out, and submitted to the consideration of Lord Grey and Lord Grenville. There was no time to be lost, as the address of the Houses was to be received the following day. Accordingly, Mr. Adam and Mr. Sheridan proceeded that night, with the new draft of the answer, to Holland House, where, after a warm discussion upon the subject with Lord Grey, which ended unsatisfactorily to both parties, the final result was that the answer drawn up by the prince and Sheridan was adopted.

Lord Grey and Lord Grenville immediately sent in a dignified but injudicious reply, remonstrating with the regent,

* The words put in italics in these quotations are, in the same manner, underlined in Sheridan's copy of the paper.

† On the back of Sheridan's own copy of this answer was found written by him the following words: "Grenville's and Grey's proposed answer from the prince to the address of the two Houses;—very flimsy, and attempting to cover Grenville's conduct and consistency in supporting the present restrictions at the expense of the prince."

about which Sheridan addressed the following letter to Lord Holland :—

"Queen Street, January 15, 1811.

"DEAR HOLLAND,

"As you have been already apprised by his Royal Highness the prince that he thought it becoming the frankness of his character, and consistent with the fairness and openness of proceeding due to any of his servants whose conduct appears to have incurred the disapprobation of Lord Grey and Lord Grenville, to communicate their representations on the subject to the person so censured, I am confident you will give me credit for the pain I must have felt, to find myself an object of suspicion, or likely, in the slightest degree, to become the cause of any temporary misunderstanding between his Royal Highness and those distinguished characters, whom his Royal Highness appears to destine to those responsible situations which must in all public matters entitle them to his exclusive confidence.

"I shall as briefly as I can state the circumstances of the fact, so distinctly referred to in the following passage of the noble lord's representation :—

"'But they would be wanting in that sincerity and openness by which they can alone hope, however imperfectly, to make any return to that gracious confidence with which your Royal Highness has condescended to honour them, if they suppressed the expression of their deep concern in finding that their humble endeavours in your Royal Highness's service have been submitted to the judgment of another person, *by whose advice* your Royal Highness has been guided in your final decision on a matter in which they alone had, however unworthily, been honoured with your Royal Highness's commands.'

"I must premise, that from my first intercourse with the prince during the present distressing emergency, such conversations as he may have honoured me with have been communications of resolutions already formed on his part, and not of matter referred to consultation, or submitted to *advice*. I know

that my declining to vote for the further adjournment of the Privy Council's examination of the physicians gave offence to some, and was considered as a difference from the party I was rightly esteemed to belong to. The intentions of the leaders of the party upon that question were in no way distinctly known to me; my secession was entirely my own act, and not only unauthorized, but perhaps unexpected by the prince. My motives for it I took the liberty of communicating to his Royal Highness, by letter, the next day, and previously to that, I had not even seen his Royal Highness since the confirmation of his Majesty's malady.

"If I differed from those who, equally attached to his Royal Highness's interest and honour, thought that his Royal Highness should have taken the step which, in my humble opinion, he has since, precisely at the proper period, taken, of sending to Lord Grenville and Lord Grey, I may certainly have erred in forming an imperfect judgment on the occasion, but, in doing so, I meant no disrespect to those who had taken a different view of the subject. But, with all deference, I cannot avoid adding, that experience of the impression made on the public mind by the reserved and retired conduct which the prince thought proper to adopt, has not shaken my opinion of the wisdom which prompted him to that determination. But here, again, I declare, that I must reject the presumption that any suggestion of mine led to the rule which the prince had prescribed to himself, my knowledge of it being, as I before said, the communication of a resolution formed on the part of his Royal Highness, and not of a proposition awaiting the advice, countenance, or corroboration of any other person. Having thought it necessary to premise thus much, as I wish to write to you without reserve or concealment of any sort, I shall as briefly as I can relate the facts which attended the composing the answer itself, as far as I was concerned.

"On Sunday, or on Monday the 7th instant, I mentioned to Lord Moira, or to Adam, that the address of the two Houses would come very quickly upon the prince, and that he should

be prepared with his answer, without entertaining the least idea of meddling with the subject myself, having received no authority from his Royal Highness to do so. Either Lord Moira or Adam informed me, before I left Carlton House, that his Royal Highness had directed Lord Moira to sketch an outline of the answer proposed, and I left town. On Tuesday evening it occurred to me to try at a sketch also of the intended reply. On Wednesday morning I read it, at Carlton House, very hastily to Adam, before I saw the prince. And here I must pause to declare, that I have entirely withdrawn from my mind any doubt, if for a moment I ever entertained any, of the perfect propriety of Adam's conduct at that hurried interview; being also long convinced, as well from intercourse with him at Carlton House as in every transaction I have witnessed, that it is impossible for him to act otherwise than with the most entire sincerity and honour towards all he deals with. I then read the paper I had put together to the prince,—the most essential part of it literally consisting of sentiments and expressions which had fallen from the prince himself in different conversations; and I read it to him without *having once heard Lord Grenville's name* even mentioned, as in any way connected with the answer proposed to be submitted to the prince. On the contrary, indeed, I was under an impression that the framing this answer was considered as the single act which it would be an unfair and embarrassing task to require the performance of from Lord Grenville. The prince approved the paper I read to him, objecting, however, to some additional paragraph of my own, and altering others. In the course of his observations he cursorily mentioned that Lord Grenville had undertaken to sketch out his idea of a proper answer, and that Lord Moira had done the same,—evidently expressing himself, to my apprehension, as not considering the framing of this answer as a matter of official responsibility anywhere, but that it was his intention to take the choice and decision respecting it on himself. If, however, I had known, before I entered the prince's apartment, that Lord Grenville and Lord

Grey had in any way undertaken to frame the answer, and had thought themselves authorized to do so, I protest the prince would never even have heard of the draft which I had prepared, though containing, as I before said, the prince's own ideas.

"His Royal Highness having laid his commands on Adam and me to dine with him alone on the next day, Thursday, I then, for the first time, learnt that Lord Grey and Lord Grenville had transmitted, through Adam, a formal draft of an answer to be submitted to the prince.

"Under these circumstances I thought it became me humbly to request the prince not to refer to me, in any respect, the paper of the noble lords, or to insist even on my hearing its contents; but that I might be permitted to put the draft he had received from me into the fire. The prince, however, who had read the noble lords' paper, declining to hear of this, proceeded to state how strongly he objected to almost every part of it. The draft delivered by Adam he took a copy of himself, as Mr. Adam read it, affixing shortly, but warmly, his comments to each paragraph. Finding his Royal Highness's objections to the whole radical and insuperable, and seeing no means myself by which the noble lords could change their draft so as to meet the prince's ideas, I ventured to propose, as the only expedient of which the time allowed, that both the papers should be laid aside, and that a very short answer, indeed, keeping clear of all topics liable to disagreement, should be immediately sketched out and be submitted that night to the judgment of Lord Grey and Lord Grenville. The lateness of the hour prevented any but very hasty discussion, and Adam and myself proceeded, by his Royal Highness's orders, to your house to relate what had passed to Lord Grey. I do not mean to disguise, however, that when I found myself bound to give my opinion, I did fully assent to the force and justice of the prince's objections, and made other observations of my own, which I thought it my duty to do, conceiving, as I freely said, that the paper could not have been drawn up but under the

pressure of embarrassing difficulties, and, as I conceived also, in considerable haste.

"Before we left Carlton House, it was agreed between Adam and myself that we were not so strictly enjoined by the prince as to make it necessary for us to communicate to the noble lords the marginal comments of the prince, and we determined to withhold them. But at the meeting with Lord Grey, at your House, he appeared to me, erroneously perhaps, to decline considering the objections as coming from the prince, but as originating in my suggestions. Upon this, I certainly called on Adam to produce the prince's copy, with his notes, in his Royal Highness's own handwriting.

"Afterwards, finding myself considerably hurt at an expression of Lord Grey's, which could only be pointed at me, and which expressed his opinion that the whole of the paper, which he assumed me to be responsible for, was 'drawn up in an invidious spirit,' I certainly did, with more warmth than was, perhaps, discreet, comment on the paper proposed to be substituted; and there ended, with no good effect, our interview.

"Adam and I saw the prince again that night, when his Royal Highness was graciously pleased to meet our joint and earnest request, by striking out from the draft of the answer, to which he still resolved to adhere, every passage which we conceived to be most liable to objection on the part of Lord Grey and Lord Grenville.

"On the next morning, Friday—a short time before he was to receive the address—when Adam returned from the noble lords, with their expressed disclaimer of the preferred answer, altered as it was, his Royal Highness still persevered to eradicate every remaining word which he thought might yet appear exceptionable to them, and made further alterations, although the fair copy of the paper had been made out.

"Thus the answer, nearly reduced to the expression of the prince's own suggestions, and without an opportunity of further meeting the wishes of the noble lords, was delivered by his

Royal Highness, and presented by the deputation of the two Houses.

"I am ashamed to have been thus prolix and circumstantial upon a matter which may appear to have admitted of much shorter explanation; but when misconception has produced distrust among those, I hope, not willingly disposed to differ, and who can have, I equally trust, but one common object in view in their different stations, I know no better way than by minuteness and accuracy of detail to remove whatever may have appeared doubtful in conduct, while unexplained, or inconsistent in principle not clearly re-asserted.

"And now, my dear lord, I have only shortly to express my own personal mortification, I will use no other word, that I should have been considered by any persons, however high in rank, or justly entitled to high political pretensions, as one so little 'attached to his Royal Highness,' or so ignorant of the value 'of the constitution of his country,' as to be held out to *him*, whose fairly-earned esteem I regard as the first honour and the sole reward of my political life, in the character of an interested contriver of a double government, and, in some measure, as an apostate from all my former principles—which have taught me, as well as the noble lords, that 'the maintenance of constitutional responsibility in the ministers of the crown is essential to any hope of success in the administration of the public interest.'

"At the same time, I am most ready to admit that it could not be their *intention* so to characterize me; but it is the direct inference which others must gather from the first paragraph I have quoted from their representation, and an inference which, I understand, has already been raised in public opinion. A departure, my dear lord, on my part, from upholding the principle declared by the noble lords, much more a presumptuous and certainly ineffectual attempt to inculcate a contrary doctrine on the mind of the Prince of Wales, would, I am confident, lose me every particle of his favour and confidence at once and for ever. But I am yet to learn what part of my

past public life—and I challenge observation on every part of my present proceedings—has warranted the adoption of any such suspicion of me, or the expression of any such imputation against me. But I will dwell no longer on this point, as it relates only to my own feelings and character; which, however, I am the more bound to consider, as others, in my humble judgment, have so hastily disregarded both. At the same time, I do sincerely declare, that no personal disappointment in my own mind interferes with the respect and esteem I entertain for Lord Grenville, or in addition to those sentiments, the friendly regard I owe to Lord Grey. To Lord Grenville I have the honour to be but very little personally known. From Lord Grey, intimately acquainted as he was with every circumstance of my conduct and principles in the years 1788-9, I confess I should have expected a very tardy and reluctant interpretation of any circumstance to my disadvantage. What the nature of my endeavours were at that time, I have the written testimonies of Mr. Fox and the Duke of Portland. To you I know those testimonies are not necessary, and perhaps it has been my recollection of what passed in those times that may have led me too securely to conceive myself above the reach even of a suspicion that I could adopt different principles now. Such as they were they remain untouched and unaltered. I conclude with sincerely declaring, that to see the prince meeting the reward which his own honourable nature, his kind and generous disposition, and his genuine devotion to the true objects of our free constitution so well entitle him to, by being surrounded and supported by an administration affectionate to his person, and ambitious of gaining and meriting his entire esteem (yet tenacious, above all things, of the constitutional principle, that exclusive confidence must attach to the responsibility of those whom he selects to be his public servants), I would with heartfelt satisfaction rather be a looker on of such a government, giving it such humble support as might be in my power, than be the possessor of any possible situation either of profit or ambition, to be obtained by any

indirectness, or by the slightest departure from the principles I have always professed, and which I have now felt called upon to re-assert.

"I have only to add, that my respect for the prince, and my sense of the frankness he has shown towards me on this occasion, decide me, with all duty, to submit this letter to his perusal, before I place it in your hands; meaning it undoubtedly to be by you shown to those to whom your judgment may deem it of any consequence to communicate it.

"I have the honour to be, &c.,

(Signed) "R. B. SHERIDAN.

"*To Lord Holland.*

"Read and approved by the prince, January 20, 1811.

"R. B. S."

The political career of Sheridan was now drawing fast to a close. He spoke but upon two or three other occasions during the session of 1812, and among the last sentences uttered by him in the House were the following; which, as calculated to leave a sweet flavour on the memory, at parting, I have great pleasure in citing:—

"My objection to the present ministry is, that they are avowedly arrayed and embodied against a principle—that of concession to the Catholics of Ireland—which I think, and must always think, essential to the safety of this empire. I will never give my vote to any administration that opposes the question of Catholic emancipation. I will not consent to receive a furlough upon that particular question, even though a ministry were carrying every other that I wished. In fine, I think the situation of Ireland a paramount consideration. If they were to be the last words I should ever utter in this House, I should say, 'Be just to Ireland, as you value your own honour;—be just to Ireland, as you value your own peace.'"

His very last words in Parliament, on his own motion relative to the overtures of peace from France, were as follow:—

"Yet, after the general subjugation and ruin of Europe,

should there ever exist an independent historian to record the awful events that produced this universal calamity, let that historian have to say,—'Great Britain fell, and with her fell all the best securities for the charities of human life, for the power and honour, the fame, the glory, and the liberties, not only of herself, but of the whole civilized world.'"

In the month of September following, Parliament was dissolved; and, presuming upon the encouragement which he had received from some of his Stafford friends, he again tried his chance of election for that borough, but without success.

The failure of Sheridan at Stafford completed his ruin. He was now excluded both from the theatre and from Parliament: the two anchors by which he held in life were gone, and he was left a lonely and helpless wreck upon the waters.

In private society, however, he could, even now (before the rubicon of the cup was passed), fully justify his high reputation for agreeableness and wit. The following is an extract from Lord Byron's diary, during six months' residence in London, in 1812-13.

"Saturday, December 18, 1813.

"Lord Holland told me a curious piece of *sentimentality* in Sheridan. The other night we were all delivering our respective and various opinions on him and '*hommes marquans*,' and mine was this:—'Whatever Sheridan has done or chosen to do has been, *par excellence*, always the *best* of its kind. He has written the *best* comedy ("School for Scandal"), the *best* opera ("The Duenna"—in my mind far before that St. Giles's lampoon, "The Beggars' Opera"), the *best* farce ("The Critic"—it is only too good for an after-piece), and the *best* address (Monologue on Garrick), and, to crown all, delivered the very *best* oration (the famous Begum Speech) ever conceived or heard in this country.' Somebody told Sheridan this the next day, and, on hearing it, he burst into tears!—Poor Brinsley! If they were tears of pleasure, I would rather have said those few but sincere words than have written the 'Iliad,' or made his own celebrated 'Philippic.' Nay, his own comedy never gratified me

more than to hear that he had derived a moment's gratification from any praise of mine—humble as it must appear to 'my elders and my betters.'"

The distresses of Sheridan now increased every day, and through the short remainder of his life it is a melancholy task to follow him. The sum arising from the sale of his theatrical property was soon exhausted, and he was driven to part with all he most valued to meet the pressing demands of the day.

One of the most humiliating trials of his pride was yet to come. In the spring of this year he was arrested and carried to a spunging-house, where he remained two or three days. This abode, from which the following painful letter to Whitbread, who had managed the re-building of Drury Lane, was written, formed a sad contrast to those princely halls, of which he had so lately been the most brilliant and favoured guest, and which were possibly, at that very moment, lighted up and crowded with gay company, unmindful of him within those prison walls :—

"Tooke's Court, Cursitor Street, Thursday, past two.

"I have done everything in my power with the solicitors, White and Founes, to obtain my release, by substituting a better security for them than their detaining me—but in vain.

"Whitbread, putting all false professions of friendship and feeling out of the question, you have no right to keep me here! —for it is in truth *your* act—if you had not forcibly withheld from me the *twelve thousand pounds*, in consequence of a threatening letter from a miserable swindler, whose claim YOU in particular knew to *be a lie*, I should at least have been out of the reach of *this* state of miserable insult—for that, and that only, lost me my seat in Parliament. And I assert that you cannot find a lawyer in the land, that is not either a natural-born fool or a corrupted scoundrel, who will not declare that your conduct in this respect was neither warrantable nor legal—but let that pass *for the present*.

"Independently of the £1000 ignorantly withheld from me

on the day of considering my last claim, I require of you to answer the draft I send herewith on the part of the committee, pledging myself to prove to them on the first day I can *personally* meet them, that there are still thousands and thousands due to me, both legally and equitably, from the theatre. My word ought to be taken on this subject; and you may produce to them this document, if one among them could think that, under all the circumstances, your conduct required a justification. O God! with what mad confidence have I trusted *your word*—I ask *justice* from you, and *no boon*. I enclosed you yesterday three different securities, which, had you been disposed to have acted even as a private friend, would have made it *certain* that you might have done so *without the smallest risk*. These you discreetly offered to put into the fire, when you found the object of your humane visit satisfied by seeing me safe in prison.

"I shall only add that I think, if I know myself, had our lots been reversed, and I had seen you in my situation, and had left Lady E. in that of my wife, I would have risked £600 rather than have left you so—although I had been in no way accessary in bringing you into that condition.

"R. B. SHERIDAN.

"*S. Whitbread, Esq.*"

Even in this situation the sanguineness of his disposition did not desert him, for he was found by Mr. Whitbread, on his visit to the spunging-house, confidently calculating on the representation for Westminster, in which the proceedings relative to Lord Cochrane at that moment promised a vacancy. On his return home, however, to Mrs. Sheridan (some arrangements having been made by Whitbread for his release), all his fortitude forsook him, and he burst into a long and passionate fit of weeping at the profanation, as he termed it, which his person had suffered.

He had for some months had a feeling that his life was near its close. The following touching passage occurred in a letter

from him to Mrs. Sheridan, after one of those differences which a remonstrance on his irregularities and want of care of himself occasioned:—"Never again let one harsh word pass between us during the period, which may not, perhaps, be long, that we are in this world together, and life, however clouded to me, is mutually spared to us."

The disorder with which he was now attacked, arose from a diseased state of the stomach, brought on partly by irregular living and partly by the harassing anxieties that had for so many years beset him. His powers of digestion grew every day worse, till he was at length unable to retain any sustenance.

While death was thus gaining fast on Sheridan, the miseries of his life were thickening round him also; nor did the last corner, in which he now lay down to die, afford him any asylum from the clamours of his legal pursuers. Writs and executions came in rapid succession, and bailiffs at length gained possession of his house. A sheriff's officer arrested the dying man in his bed, and was about to carry him off, in his blankets, to a spunging-house, when Doctor Bain interfered, and, by threatening the officer with the responsibility he must incur, if, as was but too probable, his prisoner should expire on the way, averted this outrage.

About the middle of June, the attention and sympathy of the public were, for the first time, awakened to the desolate situation of Sheridan, by an article that appeared in the *Morning Post*—written, as I understand, by a gentleman, who, though on no very cordial terms with him, forgot every other feeling in a generous pity for his fate, and in honest indignation against those who now deserted him. "Oh delay not," said the writer, without naming the person to whom he alluded—"delay not to draw aside the curtain within which that proud spirit hides its sufferings." He then adds, with a striking anticipation of what afterwards happened:—"Prefer ministering in the chamber of sickness to mustering at

"'The splendid sorrows that adorn the hearse;'

I say, *Life* and *Succour* against Westminster Abbey and a Funeral!"

This article produced a strong and general sensation, and was reprinted in the same paper the following day. Its effect, too, was soon visible in the calls made at Sheridan's door, and in the appearance of such names as the Duke of York, the Duke of Argyle, &c., among the visitors. But it was now too late; the spirit, that these unavailing tributes might once have comforted, was now fast leaving the consciousness of everything earthly but pain. After a succession of shivering fits, he fell into a state of exhaustion, in which he continued, with but few more signs of suffering, till his death. A day or two before that event, the Bishop of London read prayers by his bed-side; and on Sunday, the seventh of July, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, he died.

On the following Saturday the funeral took place;—his remains having been previously removed from Savile Row to the house of his friend, Mr. Peter Moore, in Great George Street, Westminster. From thence, at one o'clock, the procession moved on foot to the Abbey, where, in the only spot in Poet's Corner that remained unoccupied, the body was interred; and the following simple inscription marks its resting-place:—

"*RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN,*

BORN 1751,

DIED 7th JULY, 1816.

THIS MARBLE IS THE TRIBUTE OF AN ATTACHED FRIEND,

PETER MOORE."

Seldom has there been such an array of rank as graced this funeral. The pall-bearers were the Duke of Bedford, the Earl of Lauderdale, Earl Mulgrave, the Lord Bishop of London, Lord Holland, and Lord Spencer. Among the mourners were his Royal Highness the Duke of York, his Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex, the Duke of Argyle, the Marquises of Anglesea and Tavistock,; the Earls of Thanet. Jersey, Harrington, Bessborough, Mexborough, Rosslyn, and Yar-

mouth; Lords George Cavendish and Robert Spencer; Viscounts Sidmouth, Granville, and Duncannon; Lords Rivers, Erskine, and Lynedoch; the Lord Mayor; Right Hon. G. Canning and W. W. Pole, &c., &c.*

Where were they all, these royal and noble persons, who now crowded to "partake the gale" of Sheridan's glory; where were they all, while any life remained in him? Where were they all, but a few weeks before, when their interposition might have saved his heart from breaking—or when the zeal, now wasted on the grave, might have soothed and comforted the death-bed? This is a subject on which it is difficult to speak with patience. If the man was unworthy of the commonest offices of humanity while he lived, why all this parade of regret and homage over his tomb?

There appeared some verses at the time, which, written by Tom Moore, came evidently warm from the heart of the writer:—

"Oh it sickens the heart to see bosoms so hollow,
And friendships so false in the great and high-born;—
To think what a long line of titles may follow
The relics of him who died friendless and lorn!

"How proud they can press to the funeral array
Of him whom they shunn'd, in his sickness and sorrow—
How bailiffs may seize his last blanket to-day,
Whose pall shall be held up by nobles to-morrow!"

He thus speaks of the talents of Sheridan:—

"Was this then the fate of that high-gifted man,
The pride of the palace, the bower, and the hall—
The orator, dramatist, minstrel,—who ran
Through each mode of the lyre, and was master of all?

"Whose mind was an essence compounded, with art,
From the finest and best of all other men's powers;—

* In the train of all this phalanx of dukes, marquises, earls, viscounts, barons, honourables and right honourables, princes of the blood royal, and first officers of the state, it was not a little interesting to see, walking humbly, side by side, the only two men whose friendship had not waited for the call of vanity to display itself—Dr. Bain and Mr. Rogers.

Who rul'd, like a wizard the world of the heart,
And could call up its sunshine, or draw down its showers;—

"Whose humour, as gay as the firefly's light,
Play'd round every subject, and shone, as it play'd;—
Whose wit, in the combat as gentle as bright,
Ne'er carried a heart-stain away on its blade;—

"Whose eloquence, brightening whatever it tried,
Whether reason or fancy, the gay or the grave,
Was as rapid, as deep, and as brilliant a tide,
As ever bore Freedom aloft on its wave!"

F.R.S.

PLAYS.

THE RIVALS.

A COMEDY.

PREFACE.

A PREFACE to a play seems generally to be considered as a kind of closet-prologue, in which—if his piece has been successful—the author solicits that indulgence from the reader which he had before experienced from the audience: but as the scope and immediate object of a play is to please a mixed assembly in *representation* (whose judgment in the theatre at least is decisive), its degree of reputation is usually as determined as public, before it can be prepared for the cooler tribunal of the study. Thus any further solicitude on the part of the writer becomes unnecessary at least, if not an intrusion: and if the piece has been condemned in the performance, I fear an address to the closet, like an appeal to posterity, is constantly regarded as the procrastination of a suit, from a consciousness of the weakness of the cause. From these considerations, the following comedy would certainly have been submitted to the reader, without any further introduction than what it had in the representation, but that its success has probably been founded on a circumstance which the author is informed has not before attended a theatrical trial, and which consequently ought not to pass unnoticed.

I need scarcely add, that the circumstance alluded to was the withdrawing of the piece, to remove those imperfections

in the first representation which were too obvious to escape reprehension, and too numerous to admit of a hasty correction. There are few writers, I believe, who, even in the fullest consciousness of error, do not wish to palliate the faults which they acknowledge; and, however trifling the performance, to second their confession of its deficiencies, by whatever plea seems least disgraceful to their ability. In the present instance, it cannot be said to amount either to candour or modesty in me, to acknowledge an extreme inexperience and want of judgment on matters, in which, without guidance from practice, or spur from success, a young man should scarcely boast of being an adept. If it be said that under such disadvantages no one should attempt to write a play, I must beg leave to dissent from the position, while the first point of experience that I have gained on the subject is, a knowledge of the candour and judgment with which an impartial public distinguishes between the errors of inexperience and incapacity, and the indulgence which it shows even to a disposition to remedy the defects of either.

It were unnecessary to enter into any further extenuation of what was thought exceptionable in this play, but that it has been said, that the managers should have prevented some of the defects before its appearance to the public—and in particular the uncommon length of the piece as represented the first night. It were an ill return for the most liberal and gentlemanly conduct on their side, to suffer any censure to rest where none was deserved. Hurry in writing has long been exploded as an excuse for an author;—however, in the dramatic line, it may happen, that both an author and a manager may wish to fill a chasm in the entertainment of the public with a hastiness not altogether culpable. The season was advanced when I first put the play into Mr. Harris's hands: it was at that time at least double the length of any acting comedy. I profited by his judgment and experience in the curtailing of it—till, I believe, his feeling for the vanity of a young author got the better of his desire for correctness, and

he left many excrescences remaining, because he had assisted in pruning so many more. Hence, though I was not uninformed that the acts were still too long, I flattered myself that, after the first trial, I might with safer judgment proceed to remove what should appear to have been most dissatisfactory. Many other errors there were, which might in part have arisen from my being by no means conversant with plays in general, either in reading or at the theatre. Yet I own that, in one respect, I did not regret my ignorance: for as my first wish in attempting a play was to avoid every appearance of plagiary, I thought I should stand a better chance of effecting this from being in a walk which I had not frequented, and where, consequently, the progress of invention was less likely to be interrupted by starts of recollection: for on subjects on which the mind has been much informed, invention is slow of exerting itself. Faded ideas float in the fancy like half-forgotten dreams; and the imagination in its fullest enjoyments becomes suspicious of its offspring, and doubts whether it has created or adopted.

With regard to some particular passages which on the first night's representation seemed generally disliked, I confess that if I felt any emotion of surprise at the disapprobation, it was not that they were disapproved of, but that I had not before perceived that they deserved it. As some part of the attack on the piece was begun too early to pass for the sentence of *judgment*, which is ever tardy in condemning, it it has been suggested to me that much of the disapprobation must have arisen from virulence of malice, rather than severity of criticism: but as I was more apprehensive of there being just grounds to excite the latter than conscious of having deserved the former, I continue not to believe that probable which I am sure must have been unprovoked. However, if it was so, and I could even mark the quarter from whence it came, it would be ungenerous to retort; for no passion suffers more than malice from disappointment. For my own part, I see no reason why the author of a play should not regard a

first night's audience as a candid and judicious friend attending, in behalf of the public, at his last rehearsal. If he can dispense with flattery, he is sure at least of sincerity, and even though the annotation be rude, he may rely upon the justness of the comment. Considered in this light, that audience, whose *fiat* is essential to the poet's claim, whether his object be fame or profit, has surely a right to expect some deference to its opinion, from principles of politeness at least, if not from gratitude.

As for the little puny critics, who scatter their peevish strictures in private circles, and scribble at every author who has the eminence of being unconnected with them, as they are usually spleen-swoln from a vain idea of increasing their consequence, there will always be found a petulance and illiberality in their remarks, which should place them as far beneath the notice of a gentleman as their original dulness had sunk them from the level of the most unsuccessful author.

It is not without pleasure that I catch at an opportunity of justifying myself from the charge of intending any national reflection in the character of Sir Lucius O'Trigger. If any gentleman opposed the piece from that idea, I thank them sincerely for their opposition; and if the condemnation of this comedy (however misconceived the provocation) could have added one spark to the decaying flame of national attachment to the country supposed to be reflected on, I should have been happy in its fate, and might with truth have boasted that it had done more real service in its failure than the successful morality of a thousand stage-novels will ever effect.

It is usual, I believe, to thank the performers in a new play for the exertion of their several abilities. But where (as in this instance) their merit has been so striking and uncontroverted as to call for the warmest and truest applause from a number of judicious audiences, the poet's after-praise comes like the feeble acclamation of a child to close the shouts of a multitude.

The conduct, however, of the principals in a theatre cannot be so apparent to the public. I think it therefore but justice to declare, that from this theatre (the only one I can speak of from experience) those writers who wish to try the dramatic line will meet with that candour and liberal attention which are generally allowed to be better calculated to lead genius into excellence than either the precepts of judgment or the guidance of experience.

THE AUTHOR.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AS ORIGINALLY ACTED AT COVENT GARDEN THEATRE IN 1775.

SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE	*Mr. Shuter.*	DAVID	*Mr. Dunstal.*
CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE	*Mr. Woodward.*	THOMAS	*Mr. Fearon.*
FAULKLAND	*Mr. Lewis.*	MRS. MALAPROP	*Mrs. Green.*
ACRES	*Mr. Quick.*	LYDIA LANGUISH	*Miss Barsanti.*
SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER	*Mr. Lee.*	JULIA	*Mrs. Bulkley.*
FAG	*Mr. Lee Lewes.*	LUCY	*Mrs. Lessingham.*
		Maid, Boy, Servants, &c.	

SCENE.—BATH.

Time of Action—Five Hours.

PROLOGUE.

By the Author.

SPOKEN BY MR. WOODWARD AND MR. QUICK.

Enter SERJEANT-AT-LAW, *and* ATTORNEY *following, and giving a paper.*

Serj. What's here!—a vile cramp hand! I cannot see
Without my spectacles.
Att. He means his fee.
Nay, Mr. Serjeant, good sir, try again. [*Gives money.*
Serj. The scrawl improves! [*more*] O come, 'tis pretty plain.
Hey! how's this? Dibble!—sure it cannot be!
A poet's brief! a poet and a fee!
Att. Yes, sir! though you without reward, I know,
Would gladly plead the Muse's cause.
Serj. So!—so!
Att. And if the fee offends, your wrath should fall
On me.
Serj. Dear Dibble, no offence at all.
Att. Some sons of Phœbus in the courts we meet,
Serj. And fifty sons of Phœbus in the Fleet!
Att. Nor pleads he worse, who with a decent sprig
Of bays adorns his legal waste of wig.
Serj. Full-bottom'd heroes thus, on signs, unfurl
A leaf of laurel in a grove of curl!
Yet tell your client, that, in adverse days,
This wig is warmer than a bush of bays.
Att. Do you, then, sir, my client's place supply,
Profuse of robe, and prodigal of tie——
Do you, with all those blushing powers of face,
And wonted bashful hesitating grace,
Rise in the court, and flourish on the case. [*Exit.*
Serj. For practice then suppose—this brief will show it,—
Me, Serjeant Woodward,—counsel for the poet.
Used to the ground, I know 'tis hard to deal
With this dread court, from whence there's no appeal;
No tricking here, to blunt the edge of law,
Or, damn'd in equity, escape by flaw:
But judgment given, your sentence must remain;
No writ of error lies—to Drury-lane!

Yet when so kind you seem, 'tis past dispute
We gain some favour, if not costs of suit.
No spleen is here! I see no hoarded fury;—
I think I never faced a milder jury!
Sad else our plight! where frowns are transportation,
A hiss the gallows, and a groan damnation!
But such the public candour, without fear
My client waves all right of challenge here.
No newsman from our session is dismiss'd,
Nor wit nor critic we scratch off the list;
His faults can never hurt another's ease,
His crime, at worst, a bad attempt to please:
Thus, all respecting, he appeals to all,
And by the general voice will stand or fall.

PROLOGUE.

By the Author.

SPOKEN ON THE TENTH NIGHT, BY MRS. BULKLEY.

GRANTED our cause, our suit and trial o'er,
The worthy serjeant need appear no more:
In pleasing I a different client choose,
He served the Poet—I would serve the Muse.
Like him, I'll try to merit your applause,
A female counsel in a female's cause.
Look on this form,*—where humour, quaint and sly,
Dimples the cheek, and points the beaming eye;
Where gay invention seems to boast its wiles
In amorous hint, and half-triumphant smiles;
While her light mask or covers satire's strokes,
Or hides the conscious blush her wit provokes.
Look on her well—does she seem'd form'd to teach?
Should you expect to hear this lady preach?
Is grey experience suited to her youth?
Do solemn sentiments become that mouth?
Bid her be grave, those lips should rebel prove
To every theme that slanders mirth or love.
Yet, thus adorn'd with every graceful art
To charm the fancy and yet reach the heart——
Must we displace her. And instead advance
The goddess of the woful countenance—
The sentimental Muse!—Her emblems view,

* Pointing to the figure of Comedy.

The Pilgrim's Progress, and a sprig of rue!
View her—too chaste to look like flesh and blood—
Primly portray'd on emblematic wood!
There, fix'd in usurpation, should she stand,
She'll snatch the dagger from her sister's hand:
And having made her votaries weep a flood,
Good heaven! she'll end her comedies in blood—
Bid Harry Woodward break poor Dunstal's crown!
Imprison Quick, and knock Ned Shuter down;
While sad Barsanti, weeping o'er the scene,
Shall stab herself—or poison Mrs. Green.
Such dire encroachments to prevent in time,
Demands the critic's voice—the poet's rhyme.
Can our light scenes add strength to holy laws?
Such puny patronage but hurts the cause:
Fair virtue scorns our feeble aid to ask;
And moral truth disdains the trickster's mask
For here their favourite stands,* whose brow severe
And sad, claims youth's respect, and pity's tear;
Who, when oppress'd by foes her worth creates,
Can point a poniard at the guilt she hates.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Street.*

Enter THOMAS; *he crosses the Stage;* FAG *follows, looking after him.*

Fag. What! Thomas! sure 'tis he?—What! Thomas! Thomas!

Thos. Hey!—Odd's life! Mr. Fag!—give us your hand, my old fellow-servant.

Fag. Excuse my glove, Thomas:—I'm devilish glad to see you, my lad. Why, my prince of charioteers, you look as hearty!—but who the deuce thought of seeing you in Bath?

Thos. Sure, master, Madam Julia, Harry, Mrs. Kate, and the postilion, be all come.

Fag. Indeed!

Thos. Ay, master thought another fit of the gout was coming to make him a visit;—so he'd a mind to gi't the slip, and whip! we were all off at an hour's warning.

Fag. Ay, ay, hasty in everything, or it would not be Sir Anthony Absolute!

* Pointing to Tragedy.

Thos. But tell us, Mr. Fag, how does young master? Odd! Sir Anthony will stare to see the captain here!

Fag. I do not serve Captain Absolute now.

Thos. Why sure!

Fag. At present I am employed by Ensign Beverley.

Thos. I doubt, Mr. Fag, you ha'n't changed for the better.

Fag. I have not changed, Thomas.

Thos. No! Why didn't you say you had left young master?

Fag. No.—Well, honest Thomas, I must puzzle you no farther:—briefly then—Captain Absolute and Ensign Beverley are one and the same person.

Thos. The devil they are!

Fag. So it is indeed, Thomas; and the ensign half of my master being on guard at present—the captain has nothing to do with me.

Thos. So, so!—What, this is some freak, I warrant!—Do tell us, Mr. Fag, the meaning o't—you know I ha' trusted you.

Fag. You'll be secret, Thomas?

Thos. As a coach-horse.

Fag. Why then the cause of all this is—Love,—Love, Thomas, who (as you may get read to you) has been a masquerader ever since the days of Jupiter.

Thos. Ay, ay;—I guessed there was a lady in the case:—but pray, why does your master pass only for ensign?—Now if he had shammed general indeed——

Fag. Ah! Thomas, there lies the mystery o' the matter. Hark'ee, Thomas, my master is in love with a lady of a very singular taste: a lady who likes him better as a half-pay ensign than if she knew he was son and heir to Sir Anthony Absolute, a baronet of three thousand a year.

Thos. That is an odd taste indeed!—But has she got the stuff, Mr. Fag? Is she rich, hey?

Fag. Rich!—Why, I believe she owns half the stocks! Zounds! Thomas, she could pay the national debt as easily as I could my washerwoman! She has a lapdog that eats out of gold,—she feeds her parrot with small pearls,—and all her thread-papers are made of bank-notes!

Thos. Bravo, faith!—Odd! I warrant she has a set of thousands at least:—but does she draw kindly with the captain?

Fag. As fond as pigeons.

Thos. May one hear her name?

Fag. Miss Lydia Languish.—But there is an old tough aunt

in the way; though, by-the-by, she has never seen my master—for we got acquainted with miss while on a visit in Gloucestershire.

Thos. Well—I wish they were once harnessed together in matrimony.—But pray, Mr. Fag, what kind of a place is this Bath?—I ha' heard a deal of it—here's a mort o' merry-making, hey?

Fag. Pretty well, Thomas, pretty well—'tis a good lounge; in the morning we go to the pump-room (though neither my master nor I drink the waters); after breakfast we saunter on the parades, or play a game at billiards; at night we dance; but damn the place, I'm tired of it: their regular hours stupify me—not a fiddle nor a card after eleven!—However, Mr. Faulkland's gentleman and I keep it up a little in private parties;—I'll introduce you there, Thomas—you'll like him much.

Thos. Sure I know Mr. Du-Peigne—you know his master is to marry Madam Julia.

Fag. I had forgot.—But, Thomas, you must polish a little—indeed you must.—Here now—this wig!—What the devil do you do with a wig, Thomas?—None of the London whips of of any degree of *ton* wear wigs now.

Thos. More's the pity! more's the pity! I say.—Odd's life! when I heard how the lawyers and doctors had took to their own hair, I thought how 'twould go next:—odd rabbit it! when the fashion had got foot on the bar, I guessed 'twould mount to the box!—but 'tis all out of character, believe me, Mr. Fag: and look'ee, I'll never gi' up mine—the lawyers and doctors may do as they will.

Fag. Well, Thomas, we'll not quarrel about that.

Thos. Why, bless you, the gentlemen of the professions ben't all of a mind—for in our village now, thoff Jack Gauge, the exciseman, has ta'en to his carrots, there's little Dick the farrier swears he'll never forsake his bob, though all the college should appear with their own heads!

Fag. Indeed! well said, Dick!—but hold—mark! mark! Thomas.

Thos. Zooks! 'tis the captain.—Is that the lady with him?

Fag. No no, that is Madam Lucy, my master's mistress's maid. They lodge at that house—but I must after him to tell him the news.

Thos. Odd! he's giving her money!—Well, Mr. Fag——

Fag. Good-bye, Thomas. I have an appointment in Gyde's

porch this evening at eight; meet me there, and we'll make a little party. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.—*A Dressing-room in* MRS. MALAPROP'S *Lodgings.* LYDIA *sitting on a sofa, with a book in her hand.* LUCY, *as just returned from a message.*

Lucy. Indeed, ma'am, I traversed half the town in search of it: I don't believe there's a circulating library in Bath I han't been at.

Lyd. And could not you get *The Reward of Constancy?*

Lucy. No, indeed, ma'am.

Lyd. Nor *The Fatal Connexion?*

Lucy. No, indeed, ma'am.

Lyd. Nor *The Mistakes of the Heart?*

Lucy. Ma'am, as ill luck would have it, Mr. Bull said Miss Sukey Saunter had just fetched it away.

Lyd. Heigh-ho! Did you inquire for *The Delicate Distress?*

Lucy. Or, *The Memoirs of Lady Woodford?* Yes, indeed, ma'am. I asked everywhere for it; and I might have brought it from Mr. Frederick's, but Lady Slattern Lounger, who had just sent it home, had so soiled and dog's-eared it, it wa'n't fit for a Christian to read.

Lyd. Heigh-ho!—Yes, I always know when Lady Slattern has been before me. She has a most observing thumb; and, I believe, cherishes her nails for the convenience of making marginal notes.—Well, child, what have you brought me?

Lucy. Oh! here, ma'am.—[*Taking books from under her cloak, and from her pockets.*] This is *The Gordian Knot*,—and this *Peregrine Pickle.* Here are *The Tears of Sensibility*, and *Humphrey Clinker.* This is *The Memoirs of a Lady of Quality, written by herself*, and here the second volume of *The Sentimental Journey.*

Lyd. Heigh-ho!—What are those books by the glass?

Lucy. The great one is only *The Whole Duty of Man*, where I press a few blonds, ma'am.

Lyd. Very well—give me the sal volatile.

Lucy. Is it in a blue cover, ma'am?

Lyd. My smelling-bottle, you simpleton!

Lucy. Oh, the drops—here, ma'am.

Lyd. Hold!—here's some one coming—quick! see who it is. —[*Exit* LUCY.] Surely, I heard my cousin Julia's voice.

Re-enter LUCY.

Lucy. Lud! ma'am, here is Miss Melville.

Lyd. Is it possible!— [*Exit* LUCY.

Enter JULIA.

Lyd. My dearest Julia, how delighted am I!—[*Embrace.*] How unexpected was this happiness!

Jul. True, Lydia—and our pleasure is the greater.—But what has been the matter?—you were denied to me at first!

Lyd. Ah, Julia, I have a thousand things to tell you!—But first inform me what has conjured you to Bath?—Is Sir Anthony here?

Jul. He is—we are arrived within this hour—and I suppose he will be here to wait on Mrs. Malaprop as soon as he is dressed.

Lyd. Then before we are interrupted, let me impart to you some of my distress!—I know your gentle nature will sympathize with me, though your prudence may condemn me! My letters have informed you of my whole connection with Beverley; but I have lost him, Julia! My aunt has discovered our intercourse by a note she intercepted, and has confined me ever since! Yet, would you believe it? she has absolutely fallen in love with a tall Irish baronet she met one night since we have been here, at Lady Macshuffle's rout.

Jul. You jest, Lydia!

Lyd. No, upon my word.—She really carries on a kind of correspondence with him, under a feigned name though, till she chooses to be known to him;—but it is a Delia or a Celia, I assure you.

Jul. Then, surely, she is now more indulgent to her niece.

Lyd. Quite the contrary. Since she has discovered her own frailty, she is become more suspicious of mine. Then I must inform you of another plague!—That odious Acres is to be in Bath to-day; so that I protest I shall be teased out of all spirits!

Jul. Come, come, Lydia, hope for the best—Sir Anthony shall use his interest with Mrs. Malaprop.

Lyd. But you have not heard the worst. Unfortunately I had quarrelled with my poor Beverley, just before my aunt made the discovery, and I have not seen him since to make it up.

Jul. What was his offence?

Lyd. Nothing at all!—But, I don't know how it was, as often as we had been together, we had never had a quarrel, and, somehow, I was afraid he would never give me an opportunity. So, last Thursday, I wrote a letter to myself, to inform myself that Beverley was at that time paying his addresses to another woman I signed it *your friend unknown*, showed it

to Beverley, charged him with his falsehood, put myself in a violent passion, and vowed I'd never see him more.

Jul. And you let him depart so, and have not seen him since?

Lyd. 'Twas the next day my aunt found the matter out. I intended only to have teased him three days and a half, and now I've lost him for ever.

Jul. If he is as deserving and sincere as you have represented him to me, he will never give you up so. Yet, consider, Lydia, you tell me he is but an ensign, and you have thirty thousand pounds.

Lyd. But you know I lose most of my fortune if I marry without my aunt's consent, till of age; and that is what I have determined to do, ever since I knew the penalty. Nor could I love the man who would wish to wait a day for the alternative.

Jul. Nay, this is caprice!

Lyd. What, does Julia tax me with caprice?—I thought her lover Faulkland had inured her to it.

Jul. I do not love even his faults.

Lyd. But apropos—you have sent to him, I suppose?

Jul. Not yet, upon my word—nor has he the least idea of my being in Bath. Sir Anthony's resolution was so sudden, I could not inform him of it.

Lyd. Well, Julia, you are your own mistress (though under the protection of Sir Anthony), yet have you, for this long year, been a slave to the caprice, the whim, the jealousy of this ungrateful Faulkland, who will ever delay assuming the right of a husband, while you suffer him to be equally imperious as a lover.

Jul. Nay, you are wrong entirely. We were contracted before my father's death. That, and some consequent embarrassments, have delayed what I know to be my Faulkland's most ardent wish. He is too generous to trifle on such a point—and for his character, you wrong him there, too. No, Lydia, he is too proud, too noble, to be jealous; if he is captious, 'tis without dissembling; if fretful, without rudeness. Unused to the fopperies of love, he is negligent of the little duties expected from a lover—but being unhackneyed in the passion, his affection is ardent and sincere; and as it engrosses his whole soul, he expects every thought and emotion of his mistress to move in unison with his. Yet, though his pride calls for this full return, his humility makes him undervalue those qualities in him which would entitle him to it; and not feeling why he should be loved to the degree he wishes, he still

suspects that he is not loved enough. This temper, I must own, has cost me many unhappy hours; but I have learned to think myself his debtor, for those imperfections which arise from the ardour of his attachment.

Lyd. Well, I cannot blame you for defending him. But tell me candidly, Julia, had he never saved your life, do you think you should have been attached to him as you are?—Believe me, the rude blast that overset your boat was a prosperous gale of love to him.

Jul. Gratitude may have strengthened my attachment to Mr. Faulkland, but I loved him before he had preserved me; yet surely that alone were an obligation sufficient.

Lyd. Obligation! why a water spaniel would have done as much!—Well, I should never think of giving my heart to a man because he could swim.

Jul. Come, Lydia, you are too inconsiderate.

Lyd. Nay, I do but jest—What's here?

Re-enter LUCY *in a hurry.*

Lucy. O ma'am, here is Sir Anthony Absolute just come home with your aunt.

Lyd. They'll not come here.—Lucy, do you watch.

[*Exit* LUCY.

Jul. Yet I must go. Sir Anthony does not know I am here, and if we meet, he'll detain me, to show me the town. I'll take another opportunity of paying my respects to Mrs. Malaprop, when she shall treat me, as long as she chooses, with her select words so ingeniously misapplied, without being mispronounced.

Re-enter LUCY.

Lucy. O Lud! ma'am, they are both coming upstairs.

Lyd. Well, I'll not detain you, coz.—Adieu, my dear Julia. I'm sure you are in haste to send to Faulkland—There—through my room you'll find another staircase.

Jul. Adieu! [*Embraces* LYDIA, *and exit.*

Lyd. Here, my dear Lucy, hide these books. Quick, quick!—Fling *Peregrine Pickle* under the toilet—throw *Roderick Random* into the closet—put *The Innocent Adultery* into *The Whole Duty of Man*—thrust *Lord Aimworth* under the sofa—cram *Ovid* behind the bolster—there—put *The Man of Feeling* into your pocket—so, so—now lay *Mrs. Chapone* in sight, and leave *Fordyce's Sermons* open on the table.

Lucy. O burn it, ma'am! the hair-dresser has torn away as far as *Proper Pride.*

Lyd. Never mind—open at *Sobriety*.—Fling me *Lord Chesterfield's Letters*.—Now for 'em. [*Exit* LUCY.

Enter MRS. MALAPROP, *and* Sir ANTHONY ABSOLUTE.

Mrs. Mal. There, Sir Anthony, there sits the deliberate simpleton who wants to disgrace her family, and lavish herself on a fellow not worth a shilling.

Lyd. Madam, I thought you once——

Mrs. Mal. You thought, miss! I don't know any business you have to think at all—thought does not become a young woman. But the point we would request of you is, that you will promise to forget this fellow—to illiterate him, I say, quite from your memory.

Lyd. Ah, madam! our memories are independent of our wills. It is not so easy to forget.

Mrs. Mal. But I say it is, miss; there is nothing on earth so easy as to forget, if a person chooses to set about it. I'm sure I have as much forgot your poor dear uncle as if he had never existed—and I thought it my duty so to do; and let me tell you, Lydia, these violent memories don't become a young woman.

Sir Anth. Why sure she won't pretend to remember what she's ordered not!—ay, this comes of her reading!

Lyd. What crime, madam, have I committed, to be treated thus?

Mrs. Mal. Now don't attempt to extirpate yourself from the matter; you know I have proof controvertible of it.—But tell me, will you promise to do as you're bid? Will you take a husband of your friends' choosing?

Lyd. Madam, I must tell you plainly, that had I no preferment for any one else, the choice you have made would be my aversion.

Mrs. Mal. What business have you, miss, with preference and aversion? They don't become a young woman; and you ought to know, that as both always wear off, 'tis safest in matrimony to begin with a little aversion. I am sure I hated your poor dear uncle before marriage as if he'd been a blackamoor—and yet, miss, you are sensible what a wife I made!—and when it pleased Heaven to release me from him, 'tis unknown what tears I shed!—But suppose we were going to give you another choice, will you promise us to give up this Beverley?

Lyd. Could I belie my thoughts so far as to give that promise, my actions would certainly as far belie my words.

Mrs. Mal. Take yourself to your room.—You are fit company for nothing but your own ill-humours.

Lyd. Willingly, ma'am—I cannot change for the worse.

[*Exit.*

Mrs. Mal. There's a little intricate hussy for you!

Sir Anth. It is not to be wondered at, ma'am,—all this is the natural consequence of teaching girls to read. Had I a thousand daughters, by Heaven! I'd as soon have them taught the black art as their alphabet!

Mrs. Mal. Nay, nay, Sir Anthony, you are an absolute misanthropy.

Sir Anth. In my way hither, Mrs. Malaprop, I observed your niece's maid coming forth from a circulating library!—She had a book in each hand—they were half-bound volumes, with marble covers!—From that moment I guessed how full of duty I should see her mistress!

Mrs. Mal. Those are vile places, indeed!

Sir Anth. Madam, a circulating library in a town is as an evergreen tree of diabolical knowledge! It blossoms through the year!—And depend on it, Mrs. Malaprop, that they who are so fond of handling the leaves, will long for the fruit at last.

Mrs. Mal. Fy, fy, Sir Anthony! you surely speak laconically.

Sir Anth. Why, Mrs. Malaprop, in moderation now, what would you have a woman know?

Mrs. Mal. Observe me, Sir Anthony. I would by no means wish a daughter of mine to be a progeny of learning; I don't think so much learning becomes a young woman; for instance, I would never let her meddle with Greek, or Hebrew, or algebra, or simony, or fluxions, or paradoxes, or such inflammatory branches of learning—neither would it be necessary for her to handle any of your mathematical, astronomical, diabolical instruments.—But, Sir Anthony, I would send her, at nine years old, to a boarding-school, in order to learn a little ingenuity and artifice. Then, sir, she should have a supercilious knowledge in accounts;—and as she grew up, I would have her instructed in geometry, that she might know something of the contagious countries;—but above all, Sir Anthony, she should be mistress of orthodoxy, that she might not misspell, and mis-pronounce words so shamefully as girls usually do; and likewise that she might reprehend the true meaning of what she is saying. This, Sir Anthony, is what I would have a woman know;—and I don't think there is a superstitious article in it.

Sir Anth. Well, well, Mrs. Malaprop, I will dispute the point no further with you; though I must confess that you are a truly moderate and polite arguer, for almost every third word you say is on my side of the question. But, Mrs. Malaprop, to the more important point in debate—you say you have no objection to my proposal?

Mrs. Mal. None, I assure you. I am under no positive engagement with Mr. Acres, and as Lydia is so obstinate against him, perhaps your son may have better success.

Sir Anth. Well, madam, I will write for the boy directly. He knows not a syllable of this yet, though I have for some time had the proposal in my head. He is at present with his regiment.

Mrs. Mal. We have never seen your son, Sir Anthony; but I hope no objection on his side.

Sir Anth. Objection!—let him object if he dare!—No, no, Mrs. Malaprop, Jack knows that the least demur puts me in a frenzy directly. My process was always very simple—in their younger days, 'twas "Jack, do this;"—if he demurred, I knocked him down—and if he grumbled at that, I always sent him out of the room.

Mrs. Mal. Ay, and the properest way, o' my conscience!—nothing is so conciliating to young people as severity.—Well, Sir Anthony, I shall give Mr. Acres his discharge, and prepare Lydia to receive your son's invocations;—and I hope you will represent her to the captain as an object not altogether illegible.

Sir Anth. Madam, I will handle the subject prudently.—Well, I must leave you; and let me beg you, Mrs. Malaprop, to enforce this matter roundly to the girl.—Take my advice—keep a tight hand: if she rejects this proposal, clap her under lock and key; and if you were just to let the servants forget to bring her dinner for three or four days, you can't conceive how she'd come about. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Mal. Well, at any rate, I shall be glad to get her from under my intuition. She has somehow discovered my partiality for Sir Lucius O'Trigger—sure, Lucy can't have betrayed me!—No, the girl is such a simpleton, I should have made her confess it.—Lucy!—Lucy!—[*Calls.*] Had she been one of your artificial ones, I should never have trusted her.

Re-enter LUCY.

Lucy. Did you call, ma'am?

Mrs. Mal. Yes, girl.—Did you see Sir Lucius while you was out?

Lucy. No, indeed, ma'am, not a glimpse of him.

Mrs. Mal. You are sure, Lucy, that you never mentioned——

Lucy. Oh, gemini! I'd sooner cut my tongue out.

Mrs. Mal. Well, don't let your simplicity be imposed on.

Lucy. No, ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. So, come to me presently, and I'll give you another letter to Sir Lucius; but mind, Lucy—if ever you betray what you are entrusted with (unless it be other people's secrets to me), you forfeit my malevolence for ever, and your being a simpleton shall be no excuse for your locality. [*Exit.*

Lucy. Ha! ha! ha!—So, my dear Simplicity, let me give you a little respite.—[*Altering her manner.*] Let girls in my station be as fond as they please of appearing expert, and knowing in their trusts; commend me to a mask of silliness, and a pair of sharp eyes for my own interest under it!—Let me see to what account have I turned my simplicity lately.—[*Looks at a paper.*] For *abetting Miss Lydia Languish in a design of running away with an ensign!—in money, sundry times, twelve pound twelve; gowns, five; hats, ruffles, caps, &c., &c., numberless!—From the said ensign, within this last month, six guineas and a half.*—About a quarter's pay!—Item, *from Mrs. Malaprop, for betraying the young people to her*—when I found matters were likely to be discovered—*two guineas, and a black paduasoy.*—Item, *from Mr. Acres, for carrying divers letters*—which I never delivered—*two guineas, and a pair of buckles.*—Item, *from Sir Lucius O'Trigger, three crowns, two gold pocket-pieces, and a silver snuff-box!*—Well done, Simplicity!—Yet I was forced to make my Hibernian believe that he was corresponding, not with the aunt, but with the niece; for though not over rich, I found he had too much pride and delicacy to sacrifice the feelings of a gentleman to the necessities of his fortune. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE'S *Lodgings.*

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE *and* FAG.

Fag. Sir, while I was there, Sir Anthony came in: I told him you had sent me to inquire after his health, and to know if he was at leisure to see you.

Abs. And what did he say, on hearing I was at Bath?

Fag. Sir, in my life I never saw an elderly gentleman more astonished! He started back two or three paces, rapped out

a dozen interjectural oaths, and asked what the devil had brought you here.

Abs. Well, sir, and what did you say?

Fag. Oh, I lied, sir—I forget the precise lie; but you may depend on't, he got no truth from me. Yet, with submission, for fear of blunders in future, I should be glad to fix what has brought us to Bath, in order that we may lie a little consistently. Sir Anthony's servants were curious, sir, very curious indeed.

Abs. You have said nothing to them?

Fag. Oh, not a word, sir,—not a word! Mr. Thomas, indeed, the coachman (whom I take to be the discreetest of whips)——

Abs. 'Sdeath!—you rascal! you have not trusted him!

Fag. Oh, no, sir—no—no—not a syllable, upon my veracity! —He was, indeed, a little inquisitive; but I was sly, sir—deviliah sly! My master (said I), honest Thomas, (you know, sir, one says honest to one's inferiors,) is come to Bath to recruit.—Yes, sir, I said to recruit—and whether for men, money, or constitution, you know, sir, is nothing to him, nor any one else.

Abs. Well, recruit will do—let it be so.

Fag. Oh, sir, recruit will do surprisingly—indeed, to give the thing an air, I told Thomas that your honour had already enlisted five disbanded chairmen, seven minority waiters, and thirteen billiard-markers.

Abs. You blockhead, never say more than is necessary.

Fag. I beg pardon, sir—I beg pardon—but, with submission, a lie is nothing unless one supports it. Sir, whenever I draw on my invention for a good current lie, I always forge indorsements as well as the bill.

Abs. Well, take care you don't hurt your credit by offering too much security.—Is Mr. Faulkland returned?

Fag. He is above, sir, changing his dress.

Abs. Can you tell whether he has been informed of Sir Anthony and Miss Melville's arrival?

Fag. I fancy not, sir; he has seen no one since he came in but his gentleman, who was with him at Bristol.—I think, sir, I hear Mr. Faulkland coming down——

Abs. Go tell him I am here.

Fag. Yes, sir.—[*Going.*] I beg pardon, sir, but should Sir Anthony call, you will do me the favour to remember that we are recruiting, if you please.

Abs. Well, well.

Fag. And, in tenderness to my character, if your honour could bring in the chairmen and waiters, I should esteem it as an obligation; for though I never scruple a lie to serve my master, yet it hurts one's conscience to be found out. [*Exit.*

Abs. Now for my whimsical friend—if he does not know that his mistress is here, I'll tease him a little before I tell him——

Enter FAULKLAND.

Faulkland, you're welcome to Bath again; you are punctual in your return.

Faulk. Yes; I had nothing to detain me when I had finished the business I went on. Well, what news since I left you? how stand matters between you and Lydia?

Abs. Faith, much as they were; I have not seen her since our quarrel; however, I expect to be recalled every hour.

Faulk. Why don't you persuade her to go off with you at once?

Abs. What, and lose two-thirds of her fortune? You forget that, my friend.—No, no, I could have brought her to that long ago.

Faulk. Nay, then, you trifle too long—if you are sure of her, propose to the aunt in your own character, and write to Sir Anthony for his consent.

Abs. Softly, softly; for though I am convinced my little Lydia would elope with me as Ensign Beverley, yet am I by no means certain that she would take me with the impediment of our friends' consent, a regular humdrum wedding, and the reversion of a good fortune on my side: no, no; I must prepare her gradually for the discovery, and make myself necessary to her, before I risk it.—Well, but Faulkland, you'll dine with us to-day at the hotel?

Faulk. Indeed, I cannot; I am not in spirits to be of such a party.

Abs. By heavens! I shall forswear your company. You are the most teasing, captious, incorrigible lover!—Do love like a man.

Faulk. I own I am unfit for company.

Abs. Am not I a lover; ay, and a romantic one too? Yet do I carry everywhere with me such a confounded farrago of doubts, fears, hopes, wishes, and all the flimsy furniture of a country miss's brain!

Faulk. Ah! Jack, your heart and soul are not, like mine, fixed immutably on one only object. You throw for a large

stake, but losing, you could stake and throw again:—but I have set my sum of happiness on this cast, and not to succeed were to be stripped of all.

Abs. But, for heaven's sake! what grounds for apprehension can your whimsical brain conjure up at present?

Faulk. What grounds for apprehension, did you say? Heavens! are there not a thousand! I fear for her spirits—her health—her life!—My absence may fret her; her anxiety for my return, her fears for me may oppress her gentle temper: and for her health, does not every hour bring me cause to be alarmed? If it rains, some shower may even then have chilled her delicate frame! If the wind be keen, some rude blast may have affected her! The heat of noon, the dews of the evening, may endanger the life of her for whom only I value mine. O Jack! when delicate and feeling souls are separated, there is not a feature in the sky, not a movement of the elements, not an aspiration of the breeze, but hints some cause for a lover's apprehension!

Abs. Ay, but we may choose whether we will take the hint or not.—So, then, Faulkland, if you were convinced that Julia were well and in spirits, you would be entirely content?

Faulk. I should be happy beyond measure—I am anxious only for that.

Abs. Then to cure your anxiety at once—Miss Melville is in perfect health, and is at this moment in Bath.

Faulk. Nay, Jack—don't trifle with me.

Abs. She is arrived here with my father within this hour.

Faulk. Can you be serious?

Abs. I thought you knew Sir Anthony better than to be surprised at a sudden whim of this kind.—Seriously, then, it is as I tell you—upon my honour.

Faulk. My dear friend!—Hollo, Du-Peigne! my hat.—My dear Jack—now nothing on earth can give me a moment's uneasiness.

Re-enter FAG.

Fag. Sir, Mr. Acres, just arrived, is below.

Abs. Stay, Faulkland, this Acres lives within a mile of Sir Anthony, and he shall tell you how your mistress has been ever since you left her.—Fag, show the gentleman up.

[*Exit* FAG.

Faulk. What, is he much acquainted in the family?

Abs. Oh, very intimate: I insist on your not going: besides, his character will divert you.

Faulk. Well, I should like to ask him a few questions.

Abs. He is likewise a rival of mine—that is, of my other self's, for he does not think his friend Captain Absolute ever saw the lady in question; and it is ridiculous enough to hear him complain to me of one Beverley, a concealed skulking rival, who——

Faulk. Hush!—he's here.

Enter ACRES.

Acres. Ha! my dear friend, noble captain, and honest Jack, how do'st thou? just arrived, faith, as you see.—Sir, your humble servant.—Warm work on the roads, Jack!—Odds whips and wheels! I've travelled like a comet, with a tail of dust all the way as long as the Mall.

Abs. Ah! Bob, you are indeed an eccentric planet, but we know your attraction hither.—Give me leave to introduce Mr. Faulkland to you; Mr. Faulkland, Mr. Acres.

Acres. Sir, I am most heartily glad to see you: sir, I solicit your connections.—Hey, Jack—what, this is Mr. Faulkland, who——

Abs. Ay, Bob, Miss Melville's Mr. Faulkland.

Acres. Odso! she and your father can be but just arrived before me:—I suppose you have seen them. Ah! Mr. Faulkland, you are indeed a happy man.

Faulk. I have not seen Miss Melville yet, sir;—I hope she enjoyed full health and spirits in Devonshire?

Acres. Never knew her better in my life, sir,—never better. Odds blushes and blooms! she has been as healthy as the German Spa.

Faulk. Indeed!—I did hear that she had been a little indisposed.

Acres. False, false, sir—only said to vex you: quite the reverse, I assure you.

Faulk. There, Jack, you see she has the advantage of me; I had almost fretted myself ill.

Abs. Now are you angry with your mistress for not having been sick?

Faulk. No, no, you misunderstand me: yet surely a little trifling indisposition is not an unnatural consequence of absence from those we love.—Now confess—isn't there something unkind in this violent, robust, unfeeling health?

Abs. Oh, it was very unkind of her to be well in your absence, to be sure!

Acres. Good apartments, Jack.

Faulk. Well, sir, but you was saying that Miss Melville has

been so exceedingly well—what then she has been merry and gay, I suppose?—Always in spirits—hey?

Acres. Merry, odds crickets! she has been the belle and spirit of the company wherever she has been—so lively and entertaining! so full of wit and humour!

Faulk. There, Jack, there.—Oh, by my soul! there is an innate levity in woman that nothing can overcome.—What! happy, and I away!

Abs. Have done!—How foolish this is! just now you were only apprehensive for your mistress' spirits.

Faulk. Why, Jack, have I been the joy and spirit of the company?

Abs. No, indeed, you have not.

Faulk. Have I been lively and entertaining?

Abs. Oh, upon my word, I acquit you.

Faulk. Have I been full of wit and humour?

Abs. No, faith, to do you justice, you have been confoundedly stupid indeed.

Acres. What's the matter with the gentleman?

Abs. He is only expressing his great satisfaction at hearing that Julia has been so well and happy—that's all—hey, Faulkland?

Faulk. Oh! I am rejoiced to hear it—yes, yes, she has a happy disposition!

Acres. That she has indeed—then she is so accomplished—so sweet a voice—so expert at her harpsichord—such a mistress of flat and sharp, squallante, rumblante, and quiverante!—There was this time month—odds minims and crotchets! how she did chirrup at Mrs. Piano's concert!

Faulk. There again, what say you to this? you see she has been all mirth and song—not a thought of me!

Abs. Pho! man, is not music the food of love?

Faulk. Well, well, it may be so.—Pray, Mr. ——, what's his damned name?—Do you remember what songs Miss Melville sung?

Acres. Not I indeed.

Abs. Stay, now, they were some pretty melancholy purling-stream airs, I warrant; perhaps you may recollect;—did she sing, *When absent from my soul's delight?*

Acres. No, that wa'n't it.

Abs. Or, *Go, gentle gales!* [*Sings.*

Acres. Oh, no! nothing like it. Odds! now I recollect one of them—*My heart's my own, my will is free.* [*Sings.*

Faulk. Fool! fool that I am! to fix all my happiness on such a trifler! 'Sdeath! to make herself the pipe and ballad-

monger of a circle! to soothe her light heart with catches and glees!—What can you say to this, sir?

Abs. Why, that I should be glad to hear my mistress had been so merry, sir.

Faulk. Nay, nay, nay—I'm not sorry that she has been happy—no, no, I am glad of that—I would not have had her sad or sick—yet surely a sympathetic heart would have shown itself even in the choice of a song—she might have been temperately healthy, and somehow, plaintively gay;—but she has been dancing too, I doubt not!

Acres. What does the gentleman say about dancing?

Abs. He says the lady we speak of dances as well as she sings.

Acres. Ay, truly, does she—there was at our last race ball——

Faulk. Hell and the devil! There!—there—I told you so! I told you so! Oh! she thrives in my absence!—Dancing! But her whole feelings have been in opposition with mine;—I have been anxious, silent, pensive, sedentary—my days have been hours of care, my nights of watchfulness.—She has been all health! spirit! laugh! song! dance!—Oh! damned, damned levity!

Abs. For heaven's sake, Faulkland, don't expose yourself so!—Suppose she has danced, what then?—does not the ceremony of society often oblige——

Faulk. Well, well, I'll contain myself—perhaps as you say—for form sake.—What, Mr. Acres, you were praising Miss Melville's manner of dancing a minuet—hey?

Acres. Oh, I dare insure her for that—but what I was going to speak of was her country-dancing. Odds swimmings! she has such an air with her!

Faulk. Now disappointment on her!—Defend this, Absolute; why don't you defend this?—Country-dances! jigs and reels! am I to blame now? A minuet I could have forgiven—I should not have minded that—I say I should not have regarded a minuet—but country-dances!—Zounds! had she made one in a cotillon—I believe I could have forgiven even that—but to be monkey-led for a night!—to run the gauntlet through a string of amorous palming puppies!—to show paces like a managed filly!—Oh, Jack, there never can be but one man in the world whom a truly modest and delicate woman ought to pair with in a country-dance; and, even then, the rest of the couples should be her great-uncles and aunts!

Abs. Ay, to be sure!—grandfathers and grandmothers!

Faulk. If there be but one vicious mind in the set, 'twill spread like a contagion—the action of their pulse beats to the

lascivious movement of the jig—their quivering, warm-breathed sighs impregnate the very air—the atmosphere becomes electrical to love, and each amorous spark darts through every link of the chain!—I must leave you—I own I am somewhat flurried—and that confounded looby has perceived it.

[*Going.*

Abs. Nay, but stay, Faulkland, and thank Mr. Acres for his good news.

Faulk. Damn his news! [*Exit.*

Abs. Ha! ha! ha! poor Faulkland five minutes since—"nothing on earth could give him a moment's uneasiness!"

Acres. The gentleman wa'n't angry at my praising his mistress, was he?

Abs. A little jealous, I believe, Bob.

Acres. You don't say so? Ha! ha! jealous of me—that's a good joke.

Abs. There's nothing strange in that, Bob; let me tell you, that sprightly grace and insinuating manner of yours will do some mischief among the girls here.

Acres. Ah! you joke—ha! ha! mischief—ha! ha! but you know I am not my own property, my dear Lydia has forestalled me. She could never abide me in the country, because I used to dress so badly—but odds frogs and tambours! I shan't take matters so here, now ancient madam has no voice in it: I'll make my old clothes know who's master. I shall straightway cashier the hunting-frock, and render my leather breeches incapable. My hair has been in training some time.

Abs. Indeed!

Acres. Ay—and tho'ff the side curls are a little restive, my hind-part takes it very kindly.

Abs. Oh, you'll polish, I doubt not.

Acres. Absolutely I propose so—then if I can find out this Ensign Beverley, odds triggers and flints! I'll make him know the difference o't.

Abs. Spoke like a man! But pray, Bob, I observe you have got an odd kind of a new method of swearing——

Acres. Ha! ha! you've taken notice of it—'tis genteel, isn't it!—I didn't invent it myself though; but a commander in our militia, a great scholar, I assure you, says that there is no meaning in the common oaths, and that nothing but their antiquity makes them respectable;—because, he says, the ancients would never stick to an oath or two, but would say, by Jove! or by Bacchus! or by Mars! or by Venus! or by Pallas, according to the sentiment: so that to swear with propriety, says my little

major, the oath should be an echo to the sense; and this we call the *oath referential* or *sentimental swearing*—ha! ha! 'tis genteel, isn't it?

Abs. Very genteel, and very new, indeed!—and I dare say will supplant all other figures of imprecation.

Acres. Ay, ay, the best terms will grow obsolete.—Damns have had their day.

Re-enter FAG.

Fag. Sir, there is a gentleman below desires to see you.—Shall I show him into the parlour?

Abs. Ay—you may.

Acres. Well, I must be gone——

Abs. Stay; who is it, Fag?

Fag. Your father, sir.

Abs. You puppy, why didn't you show him up directly?

[*Exit* FAG.

Acres. You have business with Sir Anthony.—I expect a message from Mrs. Malaprop at my lodgings. I have sent also to my dear friend, Sir Lucius O'Trigger. Adieu, Jack! we must meet at night, when you shall give me a dozen bumpers to little Lydia.

Abs. That I will with all my heart.—[*Exit* ACRES.] Now for a parental lecture—I hope he has heard nothing of the business that has brought me here—I wish the gout had held him fast in Devonshire, with all my soul!

Enter SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE.

Sir, I am delighted to see you here; looking so well! your sudden arrival at Bath made me apprehensive for your health.

Sir Anth. Very apprehensive, I dare say, Jack.—What, you are recruiting here, hey?

Abs. Yes, sir, I am on duty.

Sir Anth. Well, Jack, I am glad to see you, though I did not expect it, for I was going to write to you on a little matter of business.—Jack, I have been considering that I grow old and infirm, and shall probably not trouble you long.

Abs. Pardon me, sir, I never saw you look more strong and hearty; and I pray frequently that you may continue so.

Sir Anth. I hope your prayers may be heard, with all my heart. Well then, Jack, I have been considering that I am so strong and hearty I may continue to plague you a long time. Now, Jack, I am sensible that the income of your commission, and what I have hitherto allowed you, is but a small pittance for a lad of your spirit.

Abs. Sir, you are very good.

Sir Anth. And it is my wish, while yet I live, to have my boy make some figure in the world. I have resolved, therefore, to fix you at once in a noble independence.

Abs. Sir, your kindness overpowers me—such generosity makes the gratitude of reason more lively than the sensations even of filial affection.

Sir Anth. I am glad you are so sensible of my attention—and you shall be master of a large estate in a few weeks.

Abs. Let my future life, sir, speak my gratitude; I cannot express the sense I have of your munificence.—Yet, sir, I presume you would not wish me to quit the army?

Sir Anth. Oh, that shall be as your wife chooses.

Abs. My wife, sir!

Sir Anth. Ay, ay, settle that between you—settle that between you.

Abs. A wife, sir, did you say?

Sir Anth. Ay, a wife—why, did not I mention her before?

Abs. Not a word of her, sir.

Sir Anth. Odd so!—I mustn't forget her, though.—Yes, Jack, the independence I was talking of is by a marriage—the fortune is saddled with a wife—but I suppose that makes no difference.

Abs. Sir! sir!—you amaze me!

Sir Anth. Why, what the devil's the matter with the fool? Just now you were all gratitude and duty.

Abs. I was, sir—you talked to me of independence and a fortune, but not a word of a wife.

Sir Anth. Why—what difference does that make? Odds life, sir! if you have the estate, you must take it with the live stock on it, as it stands.

Abs. If my happiness is to be the price, I must beg leave to decline the purchase.—Pray, sir, who is the lady?

Sir Anth. What's that to you, sir?—Come, give me your promise to love, and to marry her directly.

Abs. Sure, sir, this is not very reasonable, to summon my affections for a lady I know nothing of!

Sir Anth. I am sure, sir, 'tis more unreasonable in you to object to a lady you know nothing of.

Abs. Then, sir, I must tell you plainly that my inclinations are fixed on another—my heart is engaged to an angel.

Sir Anth. Then pray let it send an excuse. It is very sorry—but business prevents its waiting on her.

Abs. But my vows are pledged to her.

Sir Anth. Let her foreclose, Jack; let her foreclose; they are not worth redeeming; besides, you have the angel's vows in exchange, I suppose; so there can be no loss there.

Abs. You must excuse me, sir, if I tell you, once for all, that in this point I cannot obey you.

Sir Anth. Hark'ee, Jack;—I have heard you for some time with patience—I have been cool—quite cool; but take care—you know I am compliance itself—when I am not thwarted;—no one more easily led—when I have my own way;—but don't put me in a frenzy.

Abs. Sir, I must repeat it—in this I cannot obey you.

Sir Anth. Now damn me! if ever I call you Jack again while I live!

Abs. Nay, sir, but hear me.

Sir Anth. Sir, I won't hear a word—not a word! not one word! so give me your promise by a nod—and I'll tell you what, Jack—I mean, you dog—if you don't, by——

Abs. What, sir, promise to link myself to some mass of ugliness! to——

Sir Anth. Zounds! sirrah! the lady shall be as ugly as I choose: she shall have a hump on each shoulder; she shall be as crooked as the crescent; her one eye shall roll like the bull's in Cox's Museum; she shall have a skin like a mummy, and the beard of a Jew—she shall be all this, sirrah!—yet I will make you ogle her all day, and sit up all night to write sonnets on her beauty.

Abs. This is reason and moderation indeed!

Sir Anth. None of your sneering, puppy! no grinning, jackanapes!

Abs. Indeed, sir, I never was in a worse humour for mirth in my life.

Sir Anth. 'Tis false, sir, I know you are laughing in your sleeve; I know you'll grin when I am gone, sirrah!

Abs. Sir, I hope I know my duty better.

Sir Anth. None of your passion, sir! none of your violence, if you please!—It won't do with me, I promise you.

Abs. Indeed, sir, I never was cooler in my life.

Sir Anth. 'Tis a confounded lie!—I know you are in a passion in your heart; I know you are, you hypocritical young dog! but it won't do.

Abs. Nay, sir, upon my word——

Sir Anth. So you will fly out! can't you be cool like me? What the devil good can passion do?—Passion is of no service, you impudent, insolent, overbearing reprobate!—There

you sneer again! don't provoke me!—but you rely upon the mildness of my temper—you do, you dog! you play upon the meekness of my disposition!—Yet take care—the patience of a saint may be overcome at last!—but mark! I give you six hours and a half to consider of this: if you then agree, without any condition, to do everything on earth that I choose, why—confound you! I may in time forgive you.—If, not, zounds! don't enter the same hemisphere with me! don't dare to breathe the same air, or use the same light with me; but get an atmosphere and a sun of your own! I'll strip you of your commission; I'll lodge a five-and-threepence in the hands of trustees, and you shall live on the interest.—I'll disown you, I'll disinherit you, I'll unget you! and damn me! if ever I call you Jack again! [*Exit.*

Abs. Mild, gentle, considerate father—I kiss your hands! —What a tender method of giving his opinion in these matters Sir Anthony has! I dare not trust him with the truth.—I wonder what old wealthy hag it is that he wants to bestow on me!—Yet he married himself for love! and was in his youth a bold intriguer, and a gay companion!

Re-enter FAG.

Fag. Assuredly, sir, your father is wrath to a degree; he comes down stairs eight or ten steps at a time—muttering, growling, and thumping the banisters all the way: I and the cook's dog stand bowing at the door—rap! he gives me a stroke on the head with his cane; bids me carry that to my master; then kicking the poor turnspit into the area, damns us all, for a puppy triumvirate!—Upon my credit, sir, were I in your place, and found my father such very bad company, I should certainly drop his acquaintance.

Abs. Cease your impertinence, sir, at present.—Did you come in for nothing more?—Stand out of the way!

[*Pushes him aside and exit.*

Fag. So! Sir Anthony trims my master: he is afraid to reply to his father—then vents his spleen on poor Fag!—When one is vexed by one person, to revenge one's self on another, who happens to come in the way, is the vilest injustice! Ah! it shows the worst temper—the basest——

Enter BOY.

Boy. Mr. Fag! Mr. Fag! your master calls you.

Fag. Well, you little dirty puppy, you need not bawl so!—The meanest disposition! the——

Boy. Quick, quick, Mr. Fag!

Fag. Quick! quick! you impudent jackanapes! am I to be commanded by you too? you little, impertinent, insolent, kitchen-bred—— [*Exit kicking and beating him.*

SCENE II.—*The North Parade.*

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. So—I shall have another rival to add to my mistress's list—Captain Absolute. However, I shall not enter his name till my purse has received notice in form. Poor Acres is dismissed!—Well, I have done him a last friendly office, in letting him know that Beverley was here before him.—Sir Lucius is generally more punctual, when he expects to hear from his *dear Dalia*, as he calls her: I wonder he's not here! —I have a little scruple of conscience from this deceit; though I should not be paid so well, if my hero knew that Delia was near fifty, and her own mistress.

Enter SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER.

Sir Luc. Ha! my little ambassadress—upon my conscience, I have been looking for you; I have been on the South Parade this half hour.

Lucy. [*Speaking simply.*] O gemini! and I have been waiting for your worship here on the North.

Sir Luc. Faith!—may be that was the reason we did not meet; and it is very comical too, how you could go out and I not see you—for I was only taking a nap at the Parade Coffee-house, and I chose the window on purpose that I might not miss you.

Lucy. My stars! Now I'd wager a sixpence I went by while you were asleep.

Sir Luc. Sure enough it must have been so—and I never dreamt it was so late, till I waked. Well, but my little girl, have you got nothing for me?

Lucy. Yes, but I have—I've got a letter for you in my pocket.

Sir Luc. O faith! I guessed you weren't come empty-handed —Well—let me see what the dear creature says.

Lucy. There, Sir Lucius. [*Gives him a letter.*

Sir Luc. [Reads.] *Sir—there is often a sudden incentive impulse in love, that has a greater induction than years of domestic combination: such was the commotion I felt at the first superfluous view of Sir Lucius O'Trigger.*—Very pretty, upon my word.—*Female punctuation forbids me to say more; yet let me add, that it will give me joy infallible to find Sir Lucius worthy the last criterion of my affections* DELIA.

Upon my conscience! Lucy, your lady is a great mistress of language. Faith, she's quite the queen of the dictionary!—for the devil a word dare refuse coming at her call—though one would think it was quite out of hearing.

Lucy. Ay, sir, a lady of her experience——

Sir Luc. Experience! what, at seventeen?

Lucy. O true, sir—but then she reads so—my stars! how she will read off hand!

Sir Luc. Faith, she must be very deep read to write this way—though she is rather an arbitrary writer too—for here are a great many poor words pressed into the service of this note, that would get their *habeas corpus* from any court in Christendom.

Lucy. Ah! Sir Lucius, if you were to hear how she talks of you!

Sir Luc. Oh, tell her I'll make her the best husband in the world, and Lady O'Trigger into the bargain!—But we must get the old gentlewoman's consent—and do everything fairly.

Lucy. Nay, Sir Lucius, I thought you wa'n't rich enough to be so nice.

Sir Luc. Upon my word, young woman, you have hit it:—I am so poor, that I can't afford to do a dirty action.—If I did not want money, I'd steal your mistress and her fortune with a great deal of pleasure.—However, my pretty girl, [*Gives her money,*] here's a little something to buy you a ribbon; and meet me in the evening, and I'll give you an answer to this. So, hussy, take a kiss beforehand to put you in mind.

[*Kisses her.*

Lucy. O Lud! Sir Lucius—I never seed such a gemman! My lady won't like you if you're so impudent.

Sir Luc. Faith she will, Lucy!—That same—pho! what's the name of it?—modesty—is a quality in a lover more praised by the women than liked; so, if your mistress asks you whether Sir Lucius ever gave you a kiss, tell her fifty—my dear.

Lucy. What, would you have me tell her a lie?

Sir Luc. Ah, then, you baggage! I'll make it a truth presently.

Lucy. For shame now! here is some one coming.

Sir Luc. Oh, faith, I'll quiet your conscience!

[*Exit humming a tune*

Enter FAG.

Fag. So, so, ma'am! I humbly beg pardon.

Lucy. O Lud! now, Mr. Fag—you flurry one so

Fag. Come, come, Lucy, here's no one by—so a little less simplicity, with a grain or two more sincerity, if you please.—You play false with us, madam.—I saw you give the baronet a letter.—My master shall know this—and if he don't call him out, I will.

Lucy. Ha! ha! ha! you gentlemen's gentlemen are so hasty. That letter was from Mrs. Malaprop, simpleton.—She is taken with Sir Lucius's address.

Fag. How! what tastes some people have!—Why, I suppose I have walked by her window a hundred times.—But what says our young lady? any message to my master?

Lucy. Sad news, Mr. Fag.—A worse rival than Acres! Sir Anthony Absolute has proposed his son.

Fag. What, Captain Absolute?

Lucy. Even so—I overheard it all.

Fag. Ha! ha! ha! very good, faith. Good bye, Lucy, I must away with this news.

Lucy. Well, you may laugh—but it is true, I assure you.—[*Going.*] But Mr. Fag, tell your master not to be cast down by this.

Fag. Oh, he'll be so disconsolate!

Lucy. And charge him not to think of quarrelling with young Absolute.

Fag. Never fear! never fear!

Lucy. Be sure—bid him keep up his spirits.

Fag. We will—we will. [*Exeunt severally.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The North Parade.*

Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Abs. 'Tis just as Fag told me, indeed. Whimsical enough, faith! My father wants to force me to marry the very girl I am plotting to run away with! He must not know of my connection with her yet awhile. He has too summary a method of proceeding in these matters. However, I'll read my recantation instantly. My conversion is something sudden, indeed—but I can assure him it is very sincere. So, so—here he comes. He looks plaguy gruff. [*Steps aside.*

Enter SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE.

Sir Anth. No—I'll die sooner than forgive him. Die, did I say? I'll live these fifty years to plague him. At our last

meeting, his impudence had almost put me out of temper. An obstinate, passionate, self-willed boy! Who can he take after? This is my return for getting him before all his brothers and sisters!—for putting him, at twelve years old, into a marching regiment, and allowing him fifty pounds a year, besides his pay, ever since! But I have done with him; he's anybody's son for me. I never will see him more, never—never—never.

Abs. [*Aside, coming forward.*] Now for a penitential face.

Sir Anth. Fellow, get out of my way.

Abs. Sir, you see a penitent before you.

Sir Anth. I see an impudent scoundrel before me.

Abs. A sincere penitent. I am come, sir, to acknowledge my error, and to submit entirely to your will.

Sir Anth. What's that?

Abs. I have been revolving, and reflecting, and considering on your past goodness, and kindness, and condescension to me.

Sir Anth. Well, sir?

Abs. I have been likewise weighing and balancing what you were pleased to mention concerning duty, and obedience, and authority.

Sir Anth. Well, puppy?

Abs. Why, then, sir, the result of my reflections is—a resolution to sacrifice every inclination of my own to your satisfaction.

Sir Anth. Why now you talk sense—absolute sense—I never heard anything more sensible in my life. Confound you! you shall be Jack again.

Abs. I am happy in the appellation.

Sir Anth. Why, then, Jack, my dear Jack, I will now inform you who the lady really is. Nothing but your passion and violence, you silly fellow, prevented my telling you at first. Prepare, Jack, for wonder and rapture—prepare. What think you of Miss Lydia Languish?

Abs. Languish! What, the Languishes of Worcestershire?

Sir Anth. Worcestershire! no. Did you never meet Mrs. Malaprop and her niece, Miss Languish, who came into our country just before you were last ordered to your regiment?

Abs. Malaprop! Languish! I don't remember ever to have heard the names before. Yet, stay—I think I do recollect something. Languish! Languish! She squints, don't she? A little red-haired girl?

Sir Anth. Squints! A red-haired girl! Zounds! no.

Abs. Then I must have forgot; it can't be the same person.

Sir Anth. Jack! Jack! what think you of blooming, love-breathing seventeen?

Abs. As to that, sir, I am quite indifferent. If I can please you in the matter, 'tis all I desire.

Sir Anth. Nay, but Jack, such eyes! such eyes! so innocently wild! so bashfully irresolute! not a glance but speaks and kindles some thought of love! Then, Jack, her cheeks! her cheeks, Jack; so deeply blushing at the insinuations of her tell-tale eyes! Then, Jack, her lips! O Jack, lips smiling at their own discretion; and if not smiling, more sweetly pouting; more lovely in sullenness.

Abs. That's she, indeed. Well done, old gentleman! [*Aside.*

Sir Anth. Then, Jack, her neck. O Jack! Jack!

Abs. And which is to be mine, sir, the niece or the aunt?

Sir Anth. Why you unfeeling, insensible puppy, I despise you! When I was of your age, such a description would have made me fly like a rocket! The aunt, indeed! Odds life! when I ran away with your mother, I would not have touched anything old or ugly to gain an empire.

Abs. Not to please your father, sir?

Sir Anth. To please my father! zounds! not to please—Oh, my father—odd so!—yes—yes; if my father indeed had desired—that's quite another matter. Though he wa'n't the indulgent father that I am, Jack.

Abs. I dare say not, sir.

Sir Anth. But, Jack, you are not sorry to find your mistress is so beautiful?

Abs. Sir, I repeat it—if I please you in this affair, 'tis all I desire. Not that I think a woman the worse for being handsome; but, sir, if you please to recollect, you before hinted something about a hump or two, one eye, and a few more graces of that kind—now, without being very nice, I own I should rather choose a wife of mine to have the usual number of limbs, and a limited quantity of back: and though one eye may be very agreeable, yet as the prejudice has always run in favour of two, I would not wish to affect a singularity in that article.

Sir Anth. What a phlegmatic sot it is! Why, sirrah, you're an anchorite!—a vile, insensible stock. You a soldier!—

you're a walking block, fit only to dust the company's regimentals on! Odds life! I have a great mind to marry the girl myself.

Abs. I am entirely at your disposal, sir; if you should think of addressing Miss Languish yourself, I suppose you would have me marry the aunt; or if you should change your mind, and take the old lady—'tis the same to me—I'll marry the niece.

Sir Anth. Upon my word, Jack, thou'rt either a very great hypocrite, or—but, come, I know your indifference on such a subject must be all a lie—I'm sure it must—come, now—damn your demure face!—come, confess, Jack—you have been lying—ha'n't you? You have been playing the hypocrite, hey!—I'll never forgive you, if you ha'n't been lying and playing the hypocrite.

Abs. I'm sorry, sir, that the respect and duty which I bear to you should be so mistaken.

Sir Anth. Hang your respect and duty! But come along with me; I'll write a note to Mrs. Malaprop, and you shall visit the lady directly. Her eyes shall be the Promethean torch to you—come along, I'll never forgive you, if you don't come back stark mad with rapture and impatience—if you don't, egad, I will marry the girl myself! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Julia's Dressing-room.*

FAULKLAND *discovered alone.*

Faulk. They told me Julia would return directly; I wonder she is not yet come! How mean does this captious, unsatisfied temper of mine appear to my cooler judgment! Yet I know not that I indulge it in any other point: but on this one subject, and to this one subject, whom I think I love beyond my life, I am ever ungenerously fretful and madly capricious! I am conscious of it—yet I cannot correct myself! What tender honest joy sparkled in her eyes when we met! how delicate was the warmth of her expressions! I was ashamed to appear less happy—though I had come resolved to wear a face of coolness and upbraiding. Sir Anthony's presence prevented my proposed expostulations: yet I must be satisfied that she has not been so very happy in my absence. She is coming! Yes!—I know the nimbleness of her tread, when she thinks her impatient Faulkland counts the moments of her stay.

Enter JULIA.

Jul. I had not hoped to see you again so soon.

Faulk. Could I, Julia, be contented with my first welcome —restrained as we were by the presence of a third person?

Jul. O Faulkland, when your kindness can make me thus happy, let me not think that I discovered something of coldness in your first salutation.

Faulk. 'Twas but your fancy, Julia. I was rejoiced to see you—to see you in such health. Sure I had no cause for coldness?

Jul. Nay, then, I see you have taken something ill. You must not conceal from me what it is.

Faulk. Well, then—shall I own to you that my joy at hearing of your health and arrival here, by your neighbour Acres, was somewhat damped by his dwelling much on the high spirits you had enjoyed in Devonshire—on your mirth—your singing—dancing, and I know not what! For such is my temper, Julia, that I should regard every mirthful moment in your absence as a treason to constancy. The mutual tear that steals down the cheek of parting lovers is a compact, that no smile shall live there till they meet again.

Jul. Must I never cease to tax my Faulkland with this teasing minute caprice? Can the idle reports of a silly boor weigh in your breast against my tried affections?

Faulk. They have no weight with me, Julia: No, no—I am happy if you have been so—yet only say, that you did not sing with mirth—say that you thought of Faulkland in the dance.

Jul. I never can be happy in your absence. If I wear a countenance of content, it is to show that my mind holds no doubt of my Faulkland's truth. If I seemed sad, it were to make malice triumph; and say, that I had fixed my heart on one, who left me to lament his roving, and my own credulity. Believe me, Faulkland, I mean not to upbraid you, when I say, that I have often dressed sorrow in smiles, lest my friends should guess whose unkindness had caused my tears.

Faulk. You were ever all goodness to me. Oh, I am a brute, when I but admit a doubt of your true constancy!

Jul. If ever without such cause from you, as I will not suppose possible, you find my affections veering but a point, may I become a proverbial scoff for levity and base ingratitude.

Faulk. Ah! Julia, that last word is grating to me. I would I had no title to your gratitude! Search your heart, Julia; perhaps what you have mistaken for love, is but the warm effusion of a too thankful heart.

Jul. For what quality must I love you?

Faulk. For no quality! To regard me for any quality of mind or understanding, were only to esteem me. And for person—I have often wished myself deformed, to be convinced that I owed no obligation there for any part of your affection.

Jul. Where nature has bestowed a show of nice attention in the features of a man, he should laugh at it as misplaced. I have seen men, who in this vain article, perhaps, might rank above you; but my heart has never asked my eyes if it were so or not.

Faulk. Now this is not well from you, Julia—I despise person in a man—yet if you loved me as I wish, though I were an Æthiop, you'd think none so fair.

Jul. I see you are determined to be unkind! The contract which my poor father bound us in gives you more than a lover's privilege.

Faulk. Again, Julia, you raise ideas that feed and justify my doubts. I would not have been more free—no—I am proud of my restraint. Yet—yet—perhaps your high respect alone for this solemn compact has fettered your inclinations, which else had made a worthier choice. How shall I be sure, had you remained unbound in thought and promise, that I should still have been the object of your persevering love?

Jul. Then try me now. Let us be free as strangers as to what is past: my heart will not feel more liberty!

Faulk. There now! so hasty, Julia! so anxious to be free! If your love for me were fixed and ardent, you would not lose your hold, even though I wished it!

Jul. Oh! you torture me to the heart! I cannot bear it.

Faulk. I do not mean to distress you. If I loved you less I should never give you an uneasy moment. But hear me. All my fretful doubts arise from this. Women are not used to weigh and separate the motives of their affections: the cold dictates of prudence, gratitude, or filial duty, may sometimes be mistaken for the pleadings of the heart. I would not boast—yet let me say, that I have neither age, person, nor character, to found dislike on; my fortune such as few ladies could be charged with indiscretion in the match. O Julia! when love receives such countenance from prudence, nice minds will be suspicious of its birth.

Jul. I know not whither your insinuations would tend;—but as they seem pressing to insult me, I will spare you the regret of having done so.—I have given you no cause for this!

[*Exit in tears*

Faulk. In tears! Stay, Julia: stay but for a moment.—The

door is fastened!—Julia!—my soul—but for one moment!—I hear her sobbing!—'Sdeath! what a brute am I to use her thus! Yet stay!—Ay—she is coming now:—how little resolution there is in woman!—how a few soft words can turn them!—No, faith!—she is not coming either.—Why, Julia—my love—say but that you forgive me—come but to tell me that—now this is being too resentful. Stay! she is coming too—I thought she would—no steadiness in anything: her going away must have been a mere trick then—she sha'n't see that I was hurt by it.—I'll affect indifference—[*Hums a tune: then listens.*] No—zounds! she's not coming—nor don't intend it, I suppose.—This is not steadiness, but obstinacy! Yet I deserve it.—What, after so long an absence to quarrel with her tenderness!—'twas barbarous and unmanly!—I should be ashamed to see her now.—I'll wait till her just resentment is abated—and when I distress her so again, may I lose her for ever! and be linked instead to some antique virago, whose gnawing passions, and long hoarded spleen, shall make me curse my folly half the day and all the night. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—MRS. MALAPROP'S *Lodgings.*

MRS. MALAPROP, *with a letter in her hand, and* CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Mrs. Mal. Your being Sir Anthony's son, captain, would itself be a sufficient accommodation; but from the ingenuity of your appearance, I am convinced you deserve the character here given of you.

Abs. Permit me to say, madam, that as I never yet have had the pleasure of seeing Miss Languish, my principal inducement in this affair at present is the honour of being allied to Mrs. Malaprop; of whose intellectual accomplishments, elegant manners, and unaffected learning, no tongue is silent.

Mrs. Mal. Sir, you do me infinite honour! I beg, captain, you'll be seated.—[*They sit.*] Ah! few gentlemen, now-a-days, know how to value the ineffectual qualities in a woman!—few think how a little knowledge becomes a gentlewoman.—Men have no sense now but for the worthless flower of beauty!

Abs. It is but too true, indeed, ma'am;—yet I fear our ladies should share the blame—they think our admiration of beauty so great, that knowledge in them would be superfluous. Thus, like garden-trees, they seldom show fruit, till time has robbed them of the more specious blossom.—Few, like Mrs. Malaprop and the orange-tree, are rich in both at once!

Mrs. Mal. Sir, you overpower me with good-breeding.—He is the very pine-apple of politeness!—You are not ignorant, captain, that this giddy girl has somehow contrived to fix her affections on a beggarly, strolling, eaves-dropping ensign, whom none of us have seen, and nobody knows anything of.

Abs. Oh, I have heard the silly affair before.—I'm not at all prejudiced against her on that account.

Mrs. Mal. You are very good and very considerate, captain. I am sure I have done everything in my power since I exploded the affair; long ago I laid my positive conjunctions on her, never to think on the fellow again;—I have since laid Sir Anthony's preposition before her; but, I am sorry to say, she seems resolved to decline every particle that I enjoin her.

Abs. It must be very distressing, indeed, ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. Oh! it gives me the hydrostatics to such a degree.—I thought she had persisted from corresponding with him; but, behold, this very day, I have interceded another letter from the fellow; I believe I have it in my pocket.

Abs. Oh, the devil! my last note. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Mal. Ay, here it is.

Abs. Ay, my note indeed! O the little traitress Lucy. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Mal. There, perhaps you may know the writing. [*Gives him the letter.*

Abs. I think I have seen the hand before—yes, I certainly must have seen this hand before—

Mrs. Mal. Nay, but read it, captain.

Abs. [Reads.] *My soul's idol, my adored Lydia!*—Very tender, indeed!

Mrs. Mal. Tender! ay, and profane too, o' my conscience.

Abs. [Reads.] *I am excessively alarmed at the intelligence you send me, the more so as my new rival*——

Mrs. Mal. That's you, sir.

Abs. [Reads.] *Has universally the character of being an accomplished gentleman and a man of honour.*—Well, that's handsome enough.

Mrs. Mal. Oh, the fellow has some design in writing so.

Abs. That he had, I'll answer for him, ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. But go on, sir—you'll see presently.

Abs. [Reads.] *As for the old weather-beaten she-dragon who guards you*—Who can he mean by that?

Mrs. Mal. Me, sir!—me!—he means me!—There—what do you think now?—but go on a little further.

Abs. Impudent scoundrel!—[Reads.] *it shall go hard but I will elude her vigilance, as I am told that the same ridiculous*

vanity, which makes her dress up her coarse features, and deck her dull chat with hard words which she don't understand——

Mrs. Mal. There, sir, an attack upon my language! what do you think of that?—an aspersion upon my parts of speech! was ever such a brute! Sure, if I reprehend any thing in this world, it is the use of my oracular tongue, and a nice derangement of epitaphs!

Abs. He deserves to be hanged and quartered! let me see —[Reads.] *same ridiculous vanity——*

Mrs. Mal. You need not read it again, sir.

Abs. I beg pardon, ma'am.—[Reads.] *does also lay her open to the grossest deceptions from flattery and pretended admiration*—an impudent coxcomb!—*so that I have a scheme to see you shortly with the old harridan's consent, and even to make her a go-between in our interview.*—Was ever such assurance!

Mrs. Mal. Did you ever hear anything like it?—he'll elude my vigilance, will he—yes, yes! ha! ha! he's very likely to enter these doors;—we'll try who can plot best!

Abs. So we will, ma'am—so we will! Ha! ha! ha! a conceited puppy, ha! ha! ha!—Well, but, Mrs. Malaprop, as the girl seems so infatuated by this fellow, suppose you were to wink at her corresponding with him for a little time—let her even plot an elopement with him—then do you connive at her escape—while I, just in the nick, will have the fellow laid by the heels, and fairly contrive to carry her off in his stead.

Mrs. Mal. I am delighted with the scheme; never was anything better perpetrated!

Abs. But, pray, could not I see the lady for a few minutes now?—I should like to try her temper a little.

Mrs. Mal. Why, I don't know—I doubt she is not prepared for a visit of this kind. There is a decorum in these matters.

Abs. O Lord! she won't mind me—only tell her Beverley——

Mrs. Mal. Sir!

Abs. Gently, good tongue. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Mal. What did you say of Beverley?

Abs. Oh, I was going to propose that you should tell her, by way of jest, that it was Beverley who was below; she'd come down fast enough then—ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. Mal. 'Twould be a trick she well deserves; besides, you know the fellow tells her he'll get my consent to see her—ha! ha! Let him if he can, I say again. Lydia, come down here!—[*Calling.*] He'll make me a go-between in their interviews!—ha! ha! ha! Come down, I say, Lydia! I don't

wonder at your laughing, ha! ha! ha! his impudence is truly ridiculous.

Abs. 'Tis very ridiculous, upon my soul, ma'am, ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. Mal. The little hussy won't hear. Well, I'll go and tell her at once who it is—she shall know that Captain Absolute is come to wait on her. And I'll make her behave as becomes a young woman.

Abs. As you please, madam.

Mrs. Mal. For the present, captain, your servant. Ah! you've not done laughing yet, I see—elude my vigilance; yes, yes; ha! ha! ha! [*Exit.*

Abs. Ha! ha! ha! one would think now that I might throw off all disguise at once, and seize my prize with security; but such is Lydia's caprice, that to undeceive were probably to lose her. I'll see whether she knows me.

[*Walks aside, and seems engaged in looking at the pictures.*

Enter LYDIA.

Lyd. What a scene am I now to go through! surely nothing can be more dreadful than to be obliged to listen to the loathsome addresses of a stranger to one's heart. I have heard of girls persecuted as I am, who have appealed in behalf of their favoured lover to the generosity of his rival; suppose I were to try it—there stands the hated rival—an officer too;—but oh, how unlike my Beverley! I wonder he don't begin—truly he seems a very negligent wooer!—quite at his ease, upon my word!—I'll speak first—Mr. Absolute.

Abs. Ma'am. [*Turns round.*

Lyd. O heavens! Beverley!

Abs. Hush;—hush, my life! softly! be not surprised!

Lyd. I am so astonished! and so terrified! and so overjoyed!—for Heaven's sake! how came you here?

Abs. Briefly, I have deceived your aunt—I was informed that my new rival was to visit here this evening, and contriving to have him kept away, have passed myself on her for Captain Absolute.

Lyd. O charming! And she really takes you for young Absolute?

Abs. Oh, she's convinced of it.

Lyd. Ha! ha! ha! I can't forbear laughing to think how her sagacity is overreached!

Abs. But we trifle with our precious moments—such another opportunity may not occur; then let me conjure my kind, my

condescending angel, to fix the time when I may rescue her from undeserving persecution, and with a licensed warmth plead for my reward.

Lyd. Will you then, Beverley, consent to forfeit that portion of my paltry wealth?—that burden on the wings of love?

Abs. Oh, come to me—rich only thus—in loveliness! Bring no portion to me but thy love—'twill be generous in you, Lydia—for well you know it is the only dower your poor Beverley can repay.

Lyd. How persuasive are his words!—how charming will poverty be with him! [*Aside.*

Abs. Ah! my soul, what a life will we then live! Love shall be our idol and support! we will worship him with a monastic strictness; abjuring all worldly toys, to centre every thought and action there. Proud of calamity, we will enjoy the wreck of wealth; while the surrounding gloom of adversity shall make the flame of our pure love show doubly bright. By Heavens! I would fling all goods of fortune from me with a prodigal hand, to enjoy the scene where I might clasp my Lydia to my bosom, and say, the world affords no smile to me but here—[*Embracing her.*] If she holds out now, the devil is in it! [*Aside.*

Lyd. Now could I fly with him to the antipodes! but my persecution is not yet come to a crisis. [*Aside.*

Re-enter MRS. MALAPROP, *listening.*

Mrs. Mal. I am impatient to know how the little hussy deports herself. [*Aside.*

Abs. So pensive, Lydia!—is then your warmth abated?

Mrs. Mal. Warmth abated!—so!—she has been in a passion, I suppose. [*Aside.*

Lyd. No—nor ever can while I have life.

Mrs. Mal. An ill-tempered little devil! She'll be in a passion all her life—will she? [*Aside.*

Lyd. Think not the idle threats of my ridiculous aunt can ever have any weight with me.

Mrs. Mal. Very dutiful, upon my word! [*Aside.*

Lyd. Let her choice be Captain Absolute, but Beverley is mine.

Mrs. Mal. I am astonished at her assurance!—to his face—this is to his face! [*Aside.*

Abs. Thus then let me enforce my suit. [*Kneeling.*

Mrs. Mal. [*Aside.*] Ay, poor young man!—down on his knees entreating for pity!—I can contain no longer.—[*Coming forward.*] Why, thou vixen!—I have overheard you.

Abs. Oh, confound her vigilance! [*Aside.*

Mrs. Mal. Captain Absolute, I know not how to apologize for her shocking rudeness.

Abs. [*Aside.*] So all's safe, I find.—[*Aloud.*] I have hopes, madam, that time will bring the young lady——

Mrs. Mal. Oh, there's nothing to be hoped for from her! she's as headstrong as an allegory on the banks of Nile.

Lyd. Nay, madam, what do you charge me with now?

Mrs. Mal. Why, thou unblushing rebel—didn't you tell this gentleman to his face that you loved another better?—didn't you say you never would be his?

Lyd. No, madam—I did not.

Mrs. Mal. Good heavens! what assurance!—Lydia, Lydia, you ought to know that lying don't become a young woman!—Didn't you boast that Beverley, that stroller Beverley, possessed your heart?—Tell me that, I say.

Lyd. 'Tis true, ma'am, and none but Beverley——

Mrs. Mal. Hold!—hold, Assurance!—you shall not be so rude.

Abs. Nay, pray, Mrs. Malaprop, don't stop the young lady's speech: she's very welcome to talk thus—it does not hurt me in the least, I assure you.

Mrs. Mal. You are too good, captain—too amiably patient—but come with me, miss.—Let us see you again soon, captain—remember what we have fixed.

Abs. I shall, ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. Come, take a graceful leave of the gentleman.

Lyd. May every blessing wait on my Beverley, my loved Bev——

Mrs. Mal. Hussy! I'll choke the word in your throat!—come along—come along.

[*Exeunt severally;* CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE *kissing his hand to* LYDIA—MRS. MALAPROP *stopping her from speaking.*

SCENE IV.—ACRES' *Lodgings.*

ACRES, *as just dressed, and* DAVID.

Acres. Indeed, David—do you think I become it so?

Dav. You are quite another creature, believe me, master, by the mass! an' we've any luck we shall see the Devon monkerony in all the print-shops in Bath!

Acres. Dress does make a difference, David.

Dav. 'Tis all in all, I think.—Difference! why, an' you were to go now to Clod Hall, I am certain the old lady wouldn't know you: Master Butler wouldn't believe his own eyes, and

Mrs. Pickle would cry, Lard presarve me! our dairy-maid would come giggling to the door, and I warrant Dolly Tester, your honour's favourite, would blush like my waistcoat.—Oons! I'll hold a gallon, there an't a dog in the house but would bark, and I question whether Phillis would wag a hair of her tail!

Acres. Ay, David, there's nothing like polishing.

Dav. So I says of your honour's boots; but the boy never needs me!

Acres. But, David, has Mr. De-la-grace been here? I must rub up my balancing, and chasing, and boring.

Dav. I'll call again, sir.

Acres. Do—and see if there are any letters for me at the post-office.

Dav. I will.—By the mass, I can't help looking at your head!—if I hadn't been by at the cooking, I wish I may die if I should have known the dish again myself. [*Exit.*

Acres. [*Practising a dancing-step.*] Sink, slide—coupee.—Confound the first inventors of cotillons! say I—they are as bad as algebra to us country gentlemen—I can walk a minuet easy enough when I am forced!—and I have been accounted a good stick in a country-dance.—Odds jigs and tabors! I never valued your cross-over to couple—figure in—right and left—and I'd foot it with e'er a captain in the county!—but these outlandish heathen allemandes and cotillons are quite beyond me!—I shall never prosper at 'em, that's sure—mine are true-born English legs—they don't understand their curst French lingo!—their *pas* this, and *pas* that, and *pas* t'other!—damn me! my feet don't like to be called paws! no, 'tis certain I have most Antigallican toes!

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Here is Sir Lucius O'Trigger to wait on you, sir.

Acres. Show him in. [*Exit* SERVANT.

Enter SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER.

Sir Luc. Mr. Acres, I am delighted to embrace you.

Acres. My dear Sir Lucius, I kiss your hands.

Sir Luc. Pray, my friend, what has brought you so suddenly to Bath?

Acres. Faith! I have followed Cupid's Jack-a-lantern, and find myself in a quagmire at last.—In short, I have been very ill used, Sir Lucius.—I don't choose to mention names, but look on me as on a very ill-used gentleman.

Sir Luc. Pray what is the case?—I ask no names.

Acres. Mark me, Sir Lucius, I fall as deep as need be in love

with a young lady—her friends take my part—I follow her to Bath—send word of my arrival; and receive answer, that the lady is to be otherwise disposed of.—This, Sir Lucius, I call being ill-used.

Sir Luc. Very ill, upon my conscience.—Pray, can you divine the cause of it?

Acres. Why, there's the matter; she has another lover, one Beverley, who, I am told, is now in Bath.—Odds slanders and lies! he must be at the bottom of it.

Sir Luc. A rival in the case, is there?—and you think he has supplanted you unfairly?

Acres. Unfairly! to be sure he has. He never could have done it fairly.

Sir Luc. Then sure you know what is to be done!

Acres. Not I, upon my soul!

Sir Luc. We wear no swords here, but you understand me.

Acres. What! fight him

Sir Luc. Ay, to be sure: what can I mean else?

Acres. But he has given me no provocation.

Sir Luc. Now, I think he has given you the greatest provocation in the world. Can a man commit a more heinous offence against another than to fall in love with the same woman? Oh, by my soul! it is the most unpardonable breach of friendship.

Acres. Breach of friendship! ay, ay; but I have no acquaintance with this man. I never saw him in my life.

Sir Luc. That's no argument at all—he has the less right then to take such a liberty.

Acres. Gad, that's true—I grow full of anger, Sir Lucius!—fire apace! Odds hilts and blades! I find a man may have a deal of valour in him, and not know it! But couldn't I contrive to have a little right of my side?

Sir Luc. What the devil signifies right, when your honour is concerned? Do you think Achilles, or my little Alexander the Great, ever inquired where the right lay? No, by my soul, they drew their broad-swords, and left the lazy sons of peace to settle the justice of it.

Acres. Your words are a grenadier's march to my heart! I believe courage must be catching! I certainly do feel a kind of valour rising as it were—a kind of courage, as I may say.—Odds flints, pans, and triggers! I'll challenge him directly.

Sir Luc. Ah, my little friend, if I had Blunderbuss Hall here, I could show you a range of ancestry, in the O'Trigger line, that would furnish the new room; every one of whom had

killed his man!—For though the mansion-house and dirty acres have slipped through my fingers, I thank heaven our honour and the family-pictures are as fresh as ever.

Acres. O, Sir Lucius! I have had ancestors too!—every man of 'em colonel or captain in the militia!—Odds balls and barrels! say no more—I'm braced for it. The thunder of your words has soured the milk of human kindness in my breast:—Zounds! as the man in the play says, *I could do such deeds!*

Sir Luc. Come, come, there must be no passion at all in the case—these things should always be done civilly.

Acres. I must be in a passion, Sir Lucius—I must be in a rage.—Dear Sir Lucius, let me be in a rage, if you love me. Come, here's pen and paper.—[*Sits down to write.*] I would the ink were red!—Indite, I say indite!—How shall I begin? Odds bullets and blades! I'll write a good bold hand, however.

Sir Luc. Pray compose yourself.

Acres. Come—now, shall I begin with an oath? Do, Sir Lucius, let me begin with a damme.

Sir Luc. Pho! pho! do the thing decently, and like a Christian. Begin now—Sir——

Acres. That's too civil by half.

Sir Luc. To prevent the confusion that might arise——

Acres. Well—

Sir Luc. From our both addressing the same lady——

Acres. Ay, there's the reason—*same lady*—well——

Sir Luc. I shall expect the honour of your company——

Acres. Zounds! I'm not asking him to dinner.

Sir Luc. Pray be easy.

Acres. Well then, *honour of your company——*

Sir Luc. To settle our pretensions——

Acres. Well.

Sir Luc. Let me see, ay, King's-Mead-Fields will do—*in King's-Mead-Fields.*

Acres. So, that's done—Well, I'll fold it up presently; my own crest—a hand and dagger shall be the seal.

Sir Luc. You see now this little explanation will put a stop at once to all confusion or misunderstanding that might arise between you.

Acres. Ay, we fight to prevent any misunderstanding.

Sir Luc. Now, I'll leave you to fix your own time.—Take my advice, and you'll decide it this evening if you can; then let the worst come of it, 'twill be off your mind to-morrow.

Acres. Very true.

Sir Luc. So I shall see nothing more of you, unless it be by letter, till the evening.—I would do myself the honour to carry your message; but, to tell you a secret, I believe I shall have just such another affair on my own hands. There is a gay captain here, who put a jest on me lately, at the expense of my country, and I only want to fall in with the gentleman, to call him out.

Acres. By my valour, I should like to see you fight first! Odds life! I should like to see you kill him, if it was only to get a little lesson.

Sir Luc. I shall be very proud of instructing you.—Well for the present—but remember now, when you meet your antagonist, do everything in a mild and agreeable manner.—Let your courage be as keen, but at the same time as polished, as your sword. [*Exeunt severally.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—ACRES' *Lodgings.*

ACRES *and* DAVID.

Dav. Then, by the mass, sir! I would do no such thing—ne'er a Sir Lucius O'Trigger in the kingdom should make me fight, when I wa'n't so minded. Oons! what will the old lady say, when she hears o't?

Acres. Ah! David, if you had heard Sir Lucius!—Odds sparks and flames! he would have roused your valour.

Dav. Not he, indeed. I hate such bloodthirsty cormorants. Look'ee, master, if you'd wanted a bout at boxing, quarter-staff, or short-staff, I should never be the man to bid you cry off: but for your curst sharps and snaps, I never knew any good come of 'em.

Acres. But my honour, David, my honour! I must be very careful of my honour.

Dav. Ay, by the mass! and I would be very careful of it; and I think in return my honour couldn't do less than to be very careful of me.

Acres. Odds blades! David, no gentleman will ever risk the loss of his honour!

Dav. I say then, it would be but civil in honour never to risk the loss of a gentleman.—Look'ee, master, this honour seems to me to be a marvellous false friend: ay, truly, a very courtier-like servant.—Put the case, I was a gentleman (which, thank God, no one can say of me;) well—my honour makes me quarrel with another gentleman of my acquaintance.—So—

we fight. (Pleasant enough that!) Boh;—I kill him—(the more's my luck!) now, pray who gets the profit of it?—Why, my honour. But put the case that he kills me!—by the mass! I go to the worms, and my honour whips over to my enemy.

Acres. No, David—in that case!—odds crowns and laurels! your honour follows you to the grave.

Dav. Now, that's just the place where I could make a shift to do without it.

Acres. Zounds! David, you are a coward!—It doesn't become my valour to listen to you.—What, shall I disgrace my ancestors?—Think of that, David—think what it would be to disgrace my ancestors!

Dav. Under favour, the surest way of not disgracing them, is to keep as long as you can out of their company. Look'ee now, master, to go to them in such haste—with an ounce of lead in your brains—I should think might as well be let alone. Our ancestors are very good kind of folks; but they are the last people I should choose to have a visiting acquaintance with.

Acres. But, David, now, you don't think there is such very, very, very great danger, hey?—Odds life! people often fight without any mischief done!

Dav. By the mass, I think 'tis ten to one against you!—Oons! here to meet some lion-headed fellow, I warrant, with his damned double-barrelled swords, and cut-and-thrust pistols!—Lord bless us! it makes me tremble to think o't!—Those be such desperate bloody-minded weapons! Well, I never could abide 'em—from a child I never could fancy 'em!—I suppose there an't been so merciless a beast in the world as your loaded pistol!

Acres. Zounds! I won't be afraid!—Odds fire and fury! you shan't make me afraid.—Here is the challenge, and I have sent for my dear friend Jack Absolute to carry it for me.

Dav. Ay, i' the name of mischief, let him be the messenger.—For my part, I wouldn't lend a hand to it for the best horse in your stable. By the mass! it don't look like another letter! It is, as I may say, a designing and malicious-looking letter; and I warrant smells of gunpowder like a soldier's pouch!—Oons! I wouldn't swear it mayn't go off!

Acres. Out, you poltroon! you han't the valour of a grasshopper.

Dav. Well, I say no more—'twill be sad news, to be sure, at Clod Hall! but I ha' done.—How Phillis will howl when she hears of it!—Ay, poor bitch, she little thinks what shooting

her master's going after! And I warrant old Crop, who has carried your honour, field and road, these ten years, will curse the hour he was born. [*Whimpering.*

Acres. It won't do, David—I am determined to fight—so get along, you coward, while I'm in the mind.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Captain Absolute, sir.

Acres. Oh! show him up. [*Exit* SERVANT.

Dav. Well, Heaven send we be all alive this time to-morrow.

Acres. What's that?—Don't provoke me, David!

Dav. Good-bye, master. [*Whimpering*

Acres. Get along, you cowardly, dastardly, croaking raven? [*Exit* DAVID.

Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Abs. What's the matter, Bob?

Acres. A vile, sheep-hearted blockhead! If I hadn't the valour of St. George and the dragon to boot——

Abs. But what did you want with me, Bob?

Acres. Oh!—There—— [*Gives him the challenge.*

Abs. [*Aside.*] *To Ensign Beverley.*—So, what's going on now!—[*Aloud.*] Well, what's this?

Acres. A challenge!

Abs. Indeed! Why, you won't fight him; will you, Bob?

Acres. Egad, but I will, Jack. Sir Lucius has wrought me to it. He has left me full of rage—and I'll fight this evening, that so much good passion mayn't be wasted.

Abs. But what have I to do with this?

Acres. Why, as I think you know something of this fellow, I want you to find him out for me, and give him this mortal defiance.

Abs. Well, give it to me, and trust me he gets it.

Acres. Thank you, my dear friend, my dear Jack; but it is giving you a great deal of trouble.

Abs. Not in the least—I beg you won't mention it.—No trouble in the world, I assure you.

Acres. You are very kind.—What it is to have a friend!—You couldn't be my second, could you, Jack?

Abs. Why no, Bob—not in this affair—it would not be quite so proper.

Acres. Well, then, I must get my friend Sir Lucius. I shall have your good wishes, however, Jack?

Abs. Whenever he meets you, believe me.

Re-enter SERVANT.

Ser. Sir Anthony Absolute is below, inquiring for the captain.

Abs. I'll come instantly.—[*Exit* SERVANT.] Well, my little hero, success attend you. [*Going.*

Acres. Stay—stay, Jack.—If Beverley should ask you what kind of a man your friend Acres is, do tell him I am a devil of a fellow—will you, Jack?

Abs. To be sure I shall. I'll say you are a determined dog—hey, Bob!

Acres. Ay, do, do—and if that frightens him, egad, perhaps he mayn't come. So tell him I generally kill a man a week; will you, Jack?

Abs. I will, I will; I'll say you are called in the country Fighting Bob.

Acres. Right—right—'tis all to prevent mischief; for I don't want to take his life if I clear my honour.

Abs. No!—that's very kind of you.

Acres. Why, you don't wish me to kill him—do you, Jack?

Abs. No, upon my soul, I do not. But a devil of a fellow, hey? [*Going.*

Acres. True, true—but stay—stay, Jack—you may add, that you never saw me in such a rage before—a most devouring rage!

Abs. I will, I will.

Acres. Remember, Jack—a determined dog!

Abs. Ay, ay, Fighting Bob! [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.—MRS. MALAPROP'S *Lodgings.*

MRS. MALAPROP *and* LYDIA.

Mrs. Mal. Why, thou perverse one!—tell me what you can object to him? Isn't he a handsome man?—tell me that. A genteel man? a pretty figure of a man?

Lyd. [*Aside.*] She little thinks whom she is praising!—[*Aloud.*] So is Beverley, ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. No caparisons, miss, if you please. Caparisons don't become a young woman. No! Captain Absolute is indeed a fine gentleman!

Lyd. Ay, the Captain Absolute you have seen. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Mal. Then he's so well bred;—so full of alacrity, and adulation!—and has so much to say for himself:—in such good language, too! His physiognomy so grammatical! Then his presence is so noble! I protest, when I saw him, I thought of what Hamlet says in the play:—

> "Hesperian curls—the front of Job himself!—
> An eye, like March, to threaten at command!—
> A station, like Harry Mercury, new—"

Something about kissing—on a hill—however, the similitude struck me directly.

Lyd. How enraged she'll be presently, when she discovers her mistake! [*Aside.*

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Sir Anthony and Captain Absolute are below, ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. Show them up here.—[*Exit* SERVANT.] Now, Lydia, I insist on your behaving as becomes a young woman. Show your good breeding, at least, though you have forgot your duty.

Lyd. Madam, I have told you my resolution!—I shall not only give him no encouragement, but I won't even speak to, or look at him.

[*Flings herself into a chair, with her face from the door.*

Enter SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE *and* CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Sir Anth. Here we are, Mrs. Malaprop; come to mitigate the frowns of unrelenting beauty,—and difficulty enough I had to bring this fellow.—I don't know what's the matter; but if I had not held him by force, he'd have given me the slip.

Mrs. Mal. You have infinite trouble, Sir Anthony, in the affair. I am ashamed for the cause!—[*Aside to* LYDIA.] Lydia, Lydia, rise, I beseech you!—pay your respects!

Sir Anth. I hope, madam, that Miss Languish has reflected on the worth of this gentleman, and the regard due to her aunt's choice, and my alliance.—[*Aside to* CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.] Now, Jack, speak to her.

Abs. [*Aside.*] What the devil shall I do!—[*Aside to* SIR ANTHONY.] You see, sir, she won't even look at me whilst you are here. I knew she wouldn't! I told you so. Let me entreat you, sir, to leave us together!

[*Seems to expostulate with his father.*

Lyd. [*Aside.*] I wonder I han't heard my aunt exclaim yet! sure she can't have looked at him!—perhaps their regimentals are alike, and she is something blind.

Sir Anth. I say, sir, I won't stir a foot yet!

Mrs. Mal. I am sorry to say, Sir Anthony, that my affluence over my niece is very small.—[*Aside to* LYDIA.] Turn round, Lydia: I blush for you!

Sir Anth. May I not flatter myself, that Miss Languish will assign what cause of dislike she can have to my son!—[*Aside to* CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.] Why don't you begin, Jack?—Speak, you puppy—speak!

Mrs. Mal. It is impossible, Sir Anthony, she can have any. She will not say she has.—[*Aside to* LYDIA.] Answer, hussy! why don't you answer?

Sir Anth. Then, madam, I trust that a childish and hasty predilection will be no bar to Jack's happiness.—[*Aside to* CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.]—Zounds! sirrah! why don't you speak!

Lyd. [*Aside.*] I think my lover seems as little inclined to conversation as myself.—How strangely blind my aunt must be!

Abs. Hem! hem! madam—hem!—[*Attempts to speak, then returns to* SIR ANTHONY.] Faith! sir, I am so confounded!—and—so—confused!—I told you I should be so, sir—I knew it.—The—the—tremor of my passion entirely takes away my presence of mind.

Sir Anth. But it don't take away your voice, fool, does it?—Go up, and speak to her directly!

[CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE *makes signs to* MRS. MALAPROP *to leave them together.*

Mrs. Mal. Sir Anthony, shall we leave them together?—[*Aside* to LYDIA.] Ah! you stubborn little vixen!

Sir Anth. Not yet, ma'am, not yet!—[*Aside to* CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.] What the devil are you at? unlock your jaws, sirrah, or——

Abs. [*Aside.*] Now Heaven send she may be too sullen to look round!—I must disguise my voice.—[*Draws near* LYDIA, *and speaks in a low hoarse tone.*] Will not Miss Languish lend an ear to the mild accents of true love? Will not——

Sir Anth. What the devil ails the fellow? Why don't you speak out?—not stand croaking like a frog in a quinsy!

Abs. The—the—excess of my awe, and my—my—my modesty, quite choke me!

Sir Anth. Ah! your modesty again!—I'll tell you what, Jack, if you don't speak out directly, and glibly too, I shall be in such a rage!—Mrs. Malaprop, I wish the lady would favour us with something more than a side-front.

[MRS. MALAPROP *seems to chide* LYDIA.

Abs. [*Aside.*] So all will out, I see!—[*Goes up to* LYDIA, *speaks softly.*] Be not surprised, my Lydia, suppress all surprise at present.

Lyd. [*Aside.*] Heavens! 'tis Beverley's voice! Sure he can't have imposed on Sir Anthony too!—[*Looks round by degrees, then starts up.*] Is this possible!—my Beverley!—how can this be?—my Beverley?

Abs. Ah! 'tis all over. [*Aside.*

Sir Anth. Beverley!—the devil—Beverley!—What can the girl mean?—this is my son, Jack Absolute.

Mrs. Mal. For shame, hussy! for shame! your head runs so on that fellow, that you have him always in your eyes!—beg Captain Absolute's pardon directly.

Lyd. I see no Captain Absolute, but my loved Beverley!

Sir Anth. Zounds! the girl's mad!—her brain's turned by reading.

Mrs. Mal. O' my conscience, I believe so!—What do you mean by Beverley, hussy?—You saw Captain Absolute before to-day; there he is—your husband that shall be.

Lyd. With all my soul, ma'am—when I refuse my Beverley——

Sir Anth. Oh! she's as mad as Bedlam!—or has this fellow been playing us a rogue's trick!—Come here, sirrah, who the devil are you?

Abs. Faith, sir, I am not quite clear myself; but I'll endeavour to recollect.

Sir Anth. Are you my son or not?—answer for your mother, you dog, if you won't for me.

Mrs. Mal. Ay, sir, who are you? O mercy! I begin to suspect!——

Abs. [*Aside.*] Ye powers of impudence, befriend me!—[*Aloud.*] Sir Anthony, most assuredly I am your wife's son, and that I sincerely believe myself to be yours also, I hope my duty has always shown.—Mrs. Malaprop, I am your most respectful admirer, and shall be proud to add affectionate nephew.—I need not tell my Lydia, that she sees her faithful Beverley, who, knowing the singular generosity of her temper, assumed that name and station, which has proved a test of the most disinterested love, which he now hopes to enjoy in a more elevated character.

Lyd. So!—there will be no elopement after all! [*Sullenly.*

Sir Anth. Upon my soul, Jack, thou art a very impudent fellow! to do you justice, I think I never saw a piece of more consummate assurance!

Abs. Oh, you flatter me, sir—you compliment—'tis my modesty you know, sir—my modesty that has stood in my way.

Sir Anth. Well, I am glad you are not the dull, insensible varlet you pretended to be, however!—I'm glad you have made a fool of your father, you dog—I am. So this was your *penitence*, your *duty* and *obedience!*—I thought it was damned sudden!—*You never heard their names before*, not you!—*what, the Languishes of Worcestershire*, hey?—*if you could please me in the affair it was all you desired!*—Ah! you dissembling villain!—

What!—[*Pointing to* LYDIA] *she squints, don't she?—a little red-haired girl!*—hey?—Why, you hypocritical young rascal!—I wonder you an't ashamed to hold up your head!

Abs. 'Tis with difficulty, sir.—I am confused—very much confused, as you must perceive.

Mrs. Mal. O Lud! Sir Anthony!—a new light breaks in upon me!—hey!—how! what! captain, did you write the letters then?—What—am I to thank you for the elegant compilation of *an old weather-beaten she-dragon*—hey!—O mercy!—was it you that reflected on my parts of speech?

Abs. Dear sir! my modesty will be overpowered at last, if you don't assist me—I shall certainly not be able to stand it!

Sir Anth. Come, come, Mrs. Malaprop, we must forget and forgive;—odds life! matters have taken so clever a turn all of a sudden, that I could find in my heart to be so good-humoured! and so gallant! hey! Mrs. Malaprop!

Mrs. Mal. Well, Sir Anthony, since you desire it, we will not anticipate the past!—so mind, young people—our retrospection will be all to the future.

Sir Anth. Come, we must leave them together; Mrs. Malaprop, they long to fly into each other's arms, I warrant!—Jack—isn't the cheek as I said, hey?—and the eye, you rogue!—and the lip—hey? Come, Mrs. Malaprop, we'll not disturb their tenderness—theirs is the time of life for happiness!—*Youth's the season made for joy*—[*Sings*]—hey!—Odds life! I'm in such spirits,—I don't know what I could not do!—Permit me, ma'am—[*Gives his hand to* MRS. MALAPROP.] Tol-de-rol—'gad, I should like to have a little fooling myself—Tol-de-rol! de-rol.

[*Exit, singing and handing* MRS. MALAPROP.—LYDIA *sits sullenly in her chair.*

Abs. [*Aside.*] So much thought bodes me no good.—[*Aloud.*] So grave, Lydia!

Lyd. Sir!

Abs. [*Aside.*] So!—egad! I thought as much!—that damned monosyllable has froze me!—[*Aloud.*] What, Lydia, now that we are as happy in our friends' consent, as in our mutual vows——

Lyd. Friends' consent indeed! [*Peevishly.*

Abs. Come, come, we must lay aside some of our romance—a little and comfort may be endured after all. And for your fortune, the lawyers shall make such settlements as——

Lyd. Lawyers! I hate lawyers!

Abs. Nay, then, we will not wait for their lingering forms, but instantly procure the licence, and——

Lyd. The licence!—I hate licence!

Abs. Oh my love! be not so unkind!—thus let me entreat—— [*Kneeling.*

Lyd. Psha!—what signifies kneeling, when you know I must have you?

Abs. [*Rising.*] Nay, madame, there shall be no constraint upon your inclinations, I promise you.—If I have lost your heart—I resign the rest—[*Aside.*] 'Gad, I must try what a little spirit will do.

Lyd. [*Rising.*] Then, sir, let me tell you, the interest you had there was acquired by a mean, unmanly imposition, and deserves the punishment of fraud.—What, you have been treating me like a child!—humouring my romance! and laughing, I suppose, at your success!

Abs. You wrong me, Lydia, you wrong me—only hear——

Lyd. So, while I fondly imagined we were deceiving my relations, and flattered myself that I should outwit and incense them all—behold my hopes are to be crushed at once, by my aunt's consent and approbation—and I am myself the only dupe at last!—[*Walking about in a heat.*] But here, sir, here is the picture—Beverley's picture! [*taking a miniature from her bosom*] which I have worn, night and day, in spite of threats and entreaties!—There, sir; [*flings it to him*] and be assured I throw the original from my heart as easily.

Abs. Nay, nay, ma'am, we will not differ as to that.—Here, [*taking out a picture*] here is Miss Lydia Languish.—What a difference!—ay, there is the heavenly assenting smile that first gave soul and spirit to my hopes!—those are the lips which sealed a vow, as yet scarce dry in Cupid's calendar! and there the half-resentful blush, that would have checked the ardour of my thanks!—Well, all that's past?—all over indeed!—There, madame—in beauty, that copy is not equal to you, but in my mind its merit over the original, in being still the same, is such—that—I cannot find in my heart to part with it.

[*Puts it up again.*

Lyd. [*Softening.*] 'Tis your own doing, sir—I, I, I suppose you are perfectly satisfied.

Abs. O, most certainly—sure, now, this is much better than being in love!—ha! ha! ha!—there's some spirit in this!—What signifies breaking some scores of solemn promises:—all that's of no consequence, you know.—To be sure people will say, that miss don't know her own mind—but never mind that! Or, perhaps, they may be ill-natured enough to hint, that the gentleman grew tired of the lady and forsook her—but don't let that fret you.

Lyd. There is no bearing his insolence. [*Bursts into tears.*

Re-enter MRS. MALAPROP *and* SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE.

Mrs. Mal. Come, we must interrupt your billing and cooing awhile.

Lyd. This is worse than your treachery and deceit, you base ingrate! [*Sobbing.*

Sir Anth. What the devil's the matter now?—Zounds! Mrs. Malaprop, this is the oddest billing and cooing I ever heard! —but what the deuce is the meaning of it?—I am quite astonished!

Abs. Ask the lady, sir.

Mrs. Mal. O mercy!—I'm quite analyzed, for my part!—Why, Lydia, what is the reason of this?

Lyd. Ask the gentleman, ma'am.

Sir Anth. Zounds! I shall be in a frenzy!—Why, Jack, you are not come out to be any one else, are you?

Mrs. Mal. Ay, sir, there's no more trick, is there?—you are not like Cerberus, three gentlemen at once, are you?

Abs. You'll not let me speak—I say the lady can account for this much better than I can.

Lyd. Ma'am, you once commanded me never to think of Beverley again—there is the man—I now obey you: for, from this moment, I renounce him for ever. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Mal. O mercy! and miracles! what a turn here is—why sure, captain, you haven't behaved disrespectfully to my niece?

Sir Anth. Ha! ha! ha!—ha! ha! ha!—now I see it. Ha! ha! ha!—now I see it—you have been too lively, Jack.

Abs. Nay, sir, upon my word——

Sir Anth. Come, no lying, Jack—I'm sure 'twas so.

Mrs. Mal. O Lud! Sir Anthony!—O fy, captain!

Abs. Upon my soul, ma'am——

Sir Anth. Come, no excuse, Jack; why, your father, you rogue, was so before you:—the blood of the Absolutes was always impatient.—Ha! ha! ha! poor little Lydia! why, you've frightened her, you dog, you have.

Abs. By all that's good, sir——

Sir Anth. Zounds! say no more, I tell you—Mrs. Malaprop shall make your peace. You must make his peace, Mrs. Malaprop:—you must tell her 'tis Jack's way—tell her 'tis all our ways—it runs in the blood of our family!—Come away, Jack—Ha! ha! ha! Mrs. Malaprop—a young villain! [*Pushing him out.*

Mrs. Mal. O! Sir Anthony!—O fy, captain!

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE III.—*The North Parade.*

Enter SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER.

Sir Luc. I wonder where this Captain Absolute hides himself! Upon my conscience! these officers are always in one's way in love affairs:—I remember I might have married Lady Dorothy Carmine, if it had not been for a little rogue of a major, who ran away with her before she could get a sight of me! And I wonder too what it is the ladies can see in them to be so fond of them—unless it be a touch of the old serpent in 'em, that makes the little creatures be caught, like vipers, with a bit of red cloth. Ha! isn't this the captain coming?—faith it is!—There is a probability of succeeding about that fellow, that is mighty provoking! Who the devil is he talking to?

[*Steps aside.*

Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Abs. [*Aside.*] To what fine purpose I have been plotting! a noble reward for all my schemes, upon my soul!—a little gipsy!—I did not think her romance could have made her so damned absurd either. 'Sdeath, I never was in a worse humour in my life!—I could cut my own throat, or any other person's, with the greatest pleasure in the world!

Sir Luc. Oh, faith! I'm in the luck of it. I never could have found him in a sweeter temper for my purpose—to be sure I'm just come in the nick! Now to enter into conversation with him, and so quarrel genteelly.—[*Goes up to* CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.] With regard to that matter, captain, I must beg leave to differ in opinion with you.

Abs. Upon my word, then, you must be a very subtle disputant:—because, sir, I happened just then to be giving no opinion at all.

Sir Luc. That's no reason. For give me leave to tell you, a man may think an untruth as well as speak one.

Abs. Very true, sir; but if a man never utters his thoughts, I should think they might stand a chance of escaping controversy.

Sir Luc. Then, sir, you differ in opinion with me, which amounts to the same thing.

Abs. Hark'ee, Sir Lucius; if I had not before known you to be a gentleman, upon my soul, I should not have discovered it at this interview: for what you can drive at, unless you mean to quarrel with me, I cannot conceive!

Sir Luc. I humbly thank you, sir, for the quickness of your apprehension.—[*Bowing.*] You have named the very thing I would be at.

Abs. Very well, sir; I shall certainly not balk your inclinations.—But I should be glad you would please to explain your motives.

Sir Luc. Pray, sir, be easy; the quarrel is a very pretty quarrel as it stands; we should only spoil it by trying to explain it. However, your memory is very short, or you could not have forgot an affront you passed on me within this week. So, no more, but name your time and place.

Abs. Well, sir, since you are so bent on it, the sooner the better; let it be this evening—here, by the Spring Gardens. We shall scarcely be interrupted.

Sir Luc. Faith! that same interruption in affairs of this nature shows very great ill-breeding. I don't know what's the reason, but in England, if a thing of this kind gets wind, people make such a pother, that a gentleman can never fight in peace and quietness. However, if it's the same to you, captain, I should take it as a particular kindness if you'd let us meet in King's-Mead-Fields, as a little business will call me there about six o'clock, and I may despatch both matters at once.

Abs. 'Tis the same to me exactly. A little after six, then, we will discuss this matter more seriously.

Sir Luc. If you please, sir; there will be very pretty small-sword light, though it won't do for a long shot. So that matter's settled, and my mind's at ease! [*Exit.*

Enter FAULKLAND.

Abs. Well met! I was going to look for you. O Faulkland! all the demons of spite and disappointment have conspired against me! I'm so vexed, that if I had not the prospect of a resource in being knocked o' the head by-and-by, I should scarce have spirits to tell you the cause.

Faulk. What can you mean?—Has Lydia changed her mind?—I should have thought her duty and inclination would now have pointed to the same object.

Abs. Ay, just as the eyes do of a person who squints: when her love-eye was fixed on me, t'other, her eye of duty, was finely obliqued: but when duty bid her point that the same way, off t'other turned on a swivel, and secured its retreat with a frown!

Faulk. But what's the resource you——

Abs. Oh, to wind up the whole, a good-natured Irishman here has—[*Mimicking* SIR LUCIUS]—begged leave to have the

pleasure of cutting my throat; and I mean to indulge him—that's all.

Faulk. Prithee, be serious!

Abs. 'Tis fact, upon my soul! Sir Lucius O'Trigger—you know him by sight—for some affront, which I am sure I never intended, has obliged me to meet him this evening at six o'clock: 'tis on that account I wished to see you; you must go with me.

Faulk. Nay, there must be some mistake, sure. Sir Lucius shall explain himself, and I dare say matters may be accommodated. But this evening did you say? I wish it had been any other time.

Abs. Why? there will be light enough: there will (as Sir Lucius says) be very pretty small-sword light, though it will not do for a long shot. Confound his long shots.

Faulk. But I am myself a good deal ruffled by a difference I have had with Julia. My vile tormenting temper has made me treat her so cruelly, that I shall not be myself till we are reconciled.

Abs. By heavens! Faulkland, you don't deserve her!

Enter SERVANT, *gives* FAULKLAND *a letter, and exit.*

Faulk. Oh, Jack! this is from Julia. I dread to open it! I fear it may be to take a last leave!—perhaps to bid me return her letters, and restore——Oh, how I suffer for my folly!

Abs. Here, let me see.—[*Takes the letter and opens it.*] Ay, a final sentence, indeed!—'tis all over with you, faith!

Faulk. Nay, Jack, don't keep me in suspense!

Abs. Hear then—[Reads.] *As I am convinced that my dear Faulkland's own reflections have already upbraided him for his last unkindness to me, I will not add a word on the subject. I wish to speak with you as soon as possible. Yours ever and truly,* JULIA. There's stubbornness and resentment for you!—[*Gives him the letter.*] Why, man, you don't seem one whit happier at this!

Faulk. O yes, I am; but—but——

Abs. Confound your buts! you never hear anything that would make another man bless himself, but you immediately damn it with a but!

Faulk. Now, Jack, as you are my friend, own honestly—don't you think there is something forward, something indelicate, in this haste to forgive? Women should never sue for reconciliation: that should always come from us. They should retain their coldness till wooed to kindness; and their pardon, like their love, should "not unsought be won."

Abs. I have not patience to listen to you! thou'rt incorrigible! so say no more on the subject. I must go to settle a few matters. Let me see you before six, remember, at my lodgings. A poor industrious devil like me, who have toiled, and drudged, and plotted to gain my ends, and am at last disappointed by other people's folly, may in pity be allowed to swear and grumble a little; but a captious sceptic in love, a slave to fretfulness and whim, who has no difficulties but of his own creating, is a subject more fit for ridicule than compassion! [*Exit.*

Faulk. I feel his reproaches; yet I would not change this too exquisite nicety for the gross content with which he tramples on the thorns of love! His engaging me in this duel has started an idea in my head, which I will instantly pursue. I'll use it as the touchstone of Julia's sincerity and disinterestedness. If her love prove pure and sterling ore, my name will rest on it with honour; and once I've stamped it there, I lay aside my doubts for ever! But if the dross of selfishness, the alloy of pride, predominate, 'twill be best to leave her as a toy for some less cautious fool to sigh for! [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—JULIA'S *Dressing-Room.*

JULIA *discovered alone.*

Jul. How this message has alarmed me! what dreadful accident can he mean? why such charge to be alone?—O Faulkland!—how many unhappy moments—how many tears have you cost me.

Enter FAULKLAND.

Jul. What means this?—why this caution, Faulkland?

Faulk. Alas! Julia, I am come to take a long farewell.

Jul. Heavens! what do you mean?

Faulk. You see before you a wretch, whose life is forfeited. Nay, start not!—the infirmity of my temper has drawn all this misery on me. I left you fretful and passionate—an untoward accident drew me into a quarrel—the event is, that I must fly this kingdom instantly. O Julia, had I been so fortunate as to have called you mine entirely, before this mischance had fallen on me, I should not so deeply dread my banishment!

Jul. My soul is oppressed with sorrow at the nature of your misfortune: had these adverse circumstances arisen from a less fatal cause I should have felt strong comfort in the thought

that I could now chase from your bosom every doubt of the warm sincerity of my love. My heart has long known no other guardian—I now entrust my person to your honour—we will fly together. When safe from pursuit, my father's will may be fulfilled—and I receive a legal claim to be the partner of your sorrows, and tenderest comforter. Then on the bosom of your wedded Julia, you may lull your keen regret to slumbering, while virtuous love, with a cherub's hand, shall smoothe the brow of upbraiding thought, and pluck the thorn from compunction.

Faulk. O Julia! I am bankrupt in gratitude! but the time is so pressing, it calls on you for so hasty a resolution.—Would you not wish some hours to weigh the advantages you forego, and what little compensation poor Faulkland can make you beside his solitary love?

Jul. I ask not a moment. No, Faulkland, I have loved you for yourself: and if I now, more than ever, prize the solemn engagement which so long has pledged us to each other, it is because it leaves no room for hard aspersions on my fame, and puts the seal of duty to an act of love. But let us not linger. Perhaps this delay——

Faulk. 'Twill be better I should not venture out again till dark. Yet am I grieved to think what numberless distresses will press heavy on your gentle disposition!

Jul. Perhaps your fortune may be forfeited by this unhappy act.—I know not whether 'tis so; but sure that alone can never make us unhappy. The little I have will be sufficient to support us; and exile never should be splendid.

Faulk. Ay, but in such an abject state of life, my wounded pride perhaps may increase the natural fretfulness of my temper, till I become a rude, morose companion, beyond your patience to endure. Perhaps the recollection of a deed my conscience cannot justify may haunt me in such gloomy and unsocial fits, that I shall hate the tenderness that would relieve me, break from your arms, and quarrel with your fondness!

Jul. If your thoughts should assume so unhappy a bent, you will the more want some mild and affectionate spirit to watch over and console you: one who, by bearing your infirmities with gentleness and resignation, may teach you so to bear the evils of your fortune.

Faulk. Julia, I have proved you to the quick! and with this useless device I throw away all my doubts. How shall I plead to be forgiven this last unworthy effect of my restless, unsatisfied disposition?

Jul. Has no such disaster happened as you related?

Faulk. I am ashamed to own that it was pretended; yet in pity, Julia, do not kill me with resenting a fault which never can be repeated: but sealing, this once, my pardon, let me to-morrow, in the face of Heaven, receive my future guide and monitress, and expiate my past folly by years of tender adoration.

Jul. Hold, Faulkland!—that you are free from a crime, which I before feared to name, Heaven knows how sincerely I rejoice! These are tears of thankfulness for that! But that your cruel doubts should have urged you to an imposition that has wrung my heart, gives me now a pang more keen than I can express!

Faulk. By Heavens! Julia——

Jul. Yet hear me.—My father loved you, Faulkland! and you preserved the life that tender parent gave me; in his presence I pledged my hand—joyfully pledged it—where before I had given my heart. When, soon after, I lost that parent, it seemed to me that Providence had, in Faulkland, shown me whither to transfer without a pause, my grateful duty, as well as my affection: hence I have been content to bear from you what pride and delicacy would have forbid me from another. I will not upbraid you, by repeating how you have trifled with my sincerity——

Faulk. I confess it all! yet hear——

Jul. After such a year of trial, I might have flattered myself that I should not have been insulted with a new probation of my sincerity, as cruel as unnecessary! I now see it is not in your nature to be content or confident in love. With this conviction—I never will be yours. While I had hopes that my persevering attention, and unreproaching kindness, might in time reform your temper, I should have been happy to have gained a dearer influence over you; but I will not furnish you with a licensed power to keep alive an incorrigible fault, at the expense of one who never would contend with you.

Faulk. Nay, but, Julia, by my soul and honour, if after this——

Jul. But one word more.—As my faith has once been given to you, I never will barter it with another.—I shall pray for your happiness with the truest sincerity; and the dearest blessing I can ask of Heaven to send you will be to charm you from that unhappy temper, which alone has prevented the performance of our solemn engagement. All I request of you is, that you will yourself reflect upon this infirmity, and when you

number up the many true delights it has deprived you of, let it not be your least regret, that it lost you the love of one who would have followed you in beggary through the world! [*Exit.*

Faulk. She's gone—for ever!—There was an awful resolution in her manner, that riveted me to my place.—O fool!—dolt!—barbarian! Cursed as I am, with more imperfections than my fellow-wretches, kind Fortune sent a heaven-gifted cherub to my aid, and, like a ruffian, I have driven her from my side!—I must now haste to my appointment. Well, my mind is tuned for such a scene. I shall wish only to become a principal in it, and reverse the tale my cursed folly put me upon forging here.—O Love!—tormentor!—fiend!—whose influence, like the moon's, acting on men of dull souls, makes idiots of them, but meeting subtler spirits, betrays their course, and urges sensibility to madness! [*Exit.*

Enter LYDIA *and* MAID.

Maid. My mistress, ma'am, I know, was here just now—perhaps she is only in the next room. [*Exit.*

Lyd. Heigh-ho! Though he has used me so, this fellow runs strangely in my head. I believe one lecture from my grave cousin will make me recall him. [*Re-enter* JULIA.] O Julia, I am come to you with such an appetite for consolation.—Lud! child, what's the matter with you? You have been crying!—I'll be hanged if that Faulkland has not been tormenting you.

Jul. You mistake the cause of my uneasiness!—Something has flurried me a little. Nothing that you can guess at.—[*Aside.*] I would not accuse Faulkland to a sister!

Lyd. Ah! whatever vexations you may have, I can assure you mine surpass them. You know who Beverley proves to be?

Jul. I will now own to you, Lydia, that Mr. Faulkland had before informed me of the whole affair. Had young Absolute been the person you took him for, I should not have accepted your confidence on the subject, without a serious endeavour to counteract your caprice.

Lyd. So, then, I see I have been deceived by every one! But I don't care—I'll never have him.

Jul. Nay, Lydia——

Lyd. Why, is it not provoking? when I thought we were coming to the prettiest distress imaginable, to find myself made a mere Smithfield bargain of at last! There, had I projected one of the most sentimental elopements!—so becoming a disguise!—so amiable a ladder of ropes!—Conscious moon—four horses—Scotch parson—with such surprise to Mrs. Malaprop

—and such paragraphs in the newspapers!—Oh, I shall die with disappointment!

Jul. I don't wonder at it!

Lyd. Now—sad reverse!—what have I to expect, but, after a deal of flimsy preparation with a bishop's licence, and my aunt's blessing, to go simpering up to the altar; or perhaps be cried three times in a country church, and have an unmannerly fat clerk ask the consent of every butcher in the parish to join John Absolute and Lydia Languish, spinster! Oh that I should live to hear myself called spinster!

Jul. Melancholy indeed!

Lyd. How mortifying, to remember the dear delicious shifts I used to be put to, to gain half a minute's conversation with this fellow! How often have I stole forth, in the coldest night in January, and found him in the garden, stuck like a dripping statue! There would he kneel to me in the snow, and sneeze and cough so pathetically! he shivering with cold and I with apprehension! and while the freezing blast numbed our joints, how warmly would he press me to pity his flame, and glow with mutual ardour!—Ah, Julia, that was something like being in love.

Jul. If I were in spirits, Lydia, I should chide you only by laughing heartily at you; but it suits more the situation of my mind, at present, earnestly to entreat you not to let a man, who loves you with sincerity, suffer that unhappiness from your caprice, which I know too well caprice can inflict.

Lyd. O Lud! what has brought my aunt here?

Enter MRS. MALAPROP, FAG, *and* DAVID.

Mrs. Mal. So! so! here's fine work!—here's fine suicide, parricide, and simulation, going on in the fields! and Sir Anthony not to be found to prevent the antistrophe!

Jul. For Heaven's sake, madam, what's the meaning of this?

Mrs. Mal. That gentleman can tell you—'twas he enveloped the affair to me.

Lyd. Do, sir, will you, inform us? [*To* FAG.

Fag. Ma'am, I should hold myself very deficient in every requisite that forms the man of breeding, if I delayed a moment to give all the information in my power to a lady so deeply interested in the affair as you are.

Lyd. But quick! quick, sir!

Fag. True, ma'am, as you say, one should be quick in divulging matters of this nature; for should we be tedious, perhaps while we are flourishing on the subject, two or three lives may be lost!

Lyd. O patience!—do, ma'am, for Heaven's sake! tell us what is the matter?

Mrs. Mal. Why, murder's the matter! slaughter's the matter! killing's the matter!—but he can tell you the perpendiculars.

Lyd. Then, prithee, sir, be brief.

Fag. Why then, ma'am, as to murder—I cannot take upon me to say—and as to slaughter, or manslaughter, that will be as the jury finds it.

Lyd. But who, sir—who are engaged in this?

Fag. Faith, ma'am, one is a young gentleman whom I should be very sorry anything was to happen to—a very pretty behaved gentleman! We have lived much together, and always on terms.

Lyd. But who is this? who! who! who?

Fag. My master, ma'am—my master—I speak of my master.

Lyd. Heavens! What, Captain Absolute!

Mrs. Mal. Oh, to be sure, you are frightened now!

Jul. But who are with him, sir?

Fag. As to the rest, ma'am, this gentleman can inform you better than I.

Jul. Do speak, friend. [*To* DAVID.

Dav. Look'ee, my lady—by the mass! there's mischief going on. Folks don't use to meet for amusement with firearms, firelocks, fire-engines, fire-screens, fire-office, and the devil knows what other crackers beside!—This, my lady, I say, has an angry favour.

Jul. But who is there beside Captain Absolute, friend?

Dav. My poor master—under favour for mentioning him first. You know me, my lady—I am David—and my master of course is, or was, Squire Acres. Then comes Squire Faulkland.

Jul. Do, ma'am, let us instantly endeavour to prevent mischief.

Mrs. Mal. O fy!—it would be very inelegant in us:—we should only participate things.

Dav. Ah! do, Mrs. Aunt, save a few lives—they are desperately given, believe me.—Above all, there is that bloodthirsty Philistine, Sir Lucius O'Trigger.

Mrs. Mal. Sir Lucius O'Trigger? O mercy! have they drawn poor little dear Sir Lucius into the scrape?—Why, how you stand, girl! you have no more feeling than one of the Derbyshire petrifactions!

Lyd What are we to do, madam?

Mrs. Mal. Why fly with the utmost felicity, to be sure, to prevent mischief!—Here, friend, you can show us the place?

Fag. If you please, ma'am, I will conduct you.—David, do you look for Sir Anthony. [*Exit* DAVID.

Mrs. Mal. Come, girls! this gentleman will exhort us.—Come, sir, you're our envoy—lead the way, and we'll precede.

Fag. Not a step before the ladies for the world!

Mrs. Mal. You're sure you know the spot?

Fag. I think I can find it, ma'am; and one good thing is, we shall hear the report of the pistols as we draw near, so we can't well miss them;—never fear, ma'am, never fear.

[*Exeunt, he talking.*

SCENE II.—*The South Parade.*

Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE, *putting his sword under his great-coat.*

Abs. A sword seen in the streets of Bath would raise as great an alarm as a mad dog.—How provoking this is in Faulkland!—never punctual! I shall be obliged to go without him at last.—Oh, the devil! here's Sir Anthony! how shall I escape him?

[*Muffles up his face, and takes a circle to go off.*

Enter SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE.

Sir Anth. How one may be deceived at a little distance! only that I see he don't know me, I could have sworn that was Jack!—Hey! Gad's life! it is—Why, Jack, what are you afraid of? hey!—sure I'm right.—Why Jack, Jack Absolute!

[*Goes up to him.*

Abs. Really, sir, you have the advantage of me:—I don't remember ever to have had the honour—my name is Saunderson, at your service.

Sir Anth. Sir, I beg your pardon—I took you—hey?—why, zounds! it is—Stay—[*Looks up to his face.*] So, so—your humble servant, Mr. Saunderson! Why, you scoundrel, what tricks are you after now?

Abs. Oh, a joke, sir, a joke! I came here on purpose to look for you, sir.

Sir Anth. You did! well, I am glad you were so lucky:—but what are you muffled up so for?—what's this for?—hey!

Abs. 'Tis cool, sir; isn't?—rather chilly somehow:—but I shall be late—I have a particular engagement.

Sir Anth. Stay!—Why, I thought you were looking for me?—Pray, Jack, where is't you are going?

Abs. Going, sir!

Sir Anth. Ay, where are you going?

Abs. Where am I going?

Sir Anth. You unmannerly puppy!

Abs. I was going, sir, to—to—to—to Lydia—sir, to Lydia—to make matters up if I could;—and I was looking for you, sir, to—to—

Sir Anth. To go with you, I suppose.—Well, come along.

Abs. Oh! zounds! no, sir, not for the world!—I wished to meet with you, sir,—to—to—to—You find it cool, I'm sure, sir—you'd better not stay out.

Sir Anth. Cool!—not at all.—Well, Jack—and what will you say to Lydia?

Abs. Oh, sir, beg her pardon, humour her—promise and vow: but I detain you, sir—consider the cold air on your gout.

Sir Anth. Oh, not at all!—not at all! I'm in no hurry.—Ah! Jack, you youngsters, when once you are wounded here [*Putting his hand to* CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE'S *breast.*] Hey! what the deuce have you got here?

Abs. Nothing, sir—nothing.

Sir Anth. What's this?—here's something damned hard.

Abs. Oh, trinkets, sir! trinkets!—a bauble for Lydia.

Sir Anth. Nay, let me see your taste.—[*Pulls his coat open, the sword falls.*] Trinkets! a bauble for Lydia!—Zounds! sirrah, you are not going to cut her throat, are you?

Abs. Ha! ha! ha!—I thought it would divert you, sir, though I didn't mean to tell you till afterwards.

Sir Anth. You didn't?—Yes, this is a very diverting trinket, truly!

Abs. Sir, I'll explain to you.—You know, sir, Lydia is romantic, devilish romantic, and very absurd of course: now, sir, I intend, if she refuses to forgive me, to unsheath this sword, and swear—I'll fall upon its point, and expire at her feet!

Sir Anth. Fall upon a fiddlestick's end!—why, I suppose it is the very thing that would please her.—Get along, you fool!

Abs. Well, sir, you shall hear of my success—you shall hear.—*O Lydia!—forgive me, or this pointed steel*—says I.

Sir Anth. O, booby! stay away and welcome—says she.—Get along! and damn your trinkets! [*Exit* CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Enter DAVID, *running.*

Dav. Stop him! stop him! Murder! Thief! Fire!—Stop fire! Stop fire!—O Sir Anthony—call! call! bid 'm stop! Murder! Fire!

Sir Anth. Fire! Murder!—Where?

Dav. Oons! he's out of sight! and I'm out of breath for my part! O Sir Anthony, why didn't you stop him? why didn't you stop him?

Sir Anth. Zounds! the fellow's mad!—Stop whom? stop Jack?

Dav. Ay, the captain, sir!—there's murder and slaughter——

Sir Anth. Murder!

Dav. Ay, please you, Sir Anthony, there's all kinds of murder, all sorts of slaughter to be seen in the fields: there's fighting going on, sir—bloody sword-and-gun fighting!

Sir Anth. Who are going to fight, dunce?

Dav. Everybody that I know of, Sir Anthony:—everybody is going to fight, my poor master, Sir Lucius O'Trigger, your son, the captain——

Sir Anth. Oh, the dog! I see his tricks.—Do you know the place?

Dav. King's-Mead-Fields.

Sir Anth. You know the way?

Dav. Not an inch; but I'll call the mayor—aldermen—constables—churchwardens—and beadles—we can't be too many to part them.

Sir Anth. Come along—give me your shoulder! we'll get assistance as we go—the lying villain!—Well, I shall be in such a frenzy!—So—this was the history of his trinkets! I'll bauble him! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*King's-Mead-Fields.*

Enter Sir LUCIUS O'TRIGGER *and* ACRES, *with pistols.*

Acres. By my valour! then, Sir Lucius, forty yards is a good distance. Odds levels and aims!—I say it is a good distance.

Sir Luc. Is it for muskets or small field-pieces? Upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, you must leave those things to me.—Stay now—I'll show you.—[*Measures paces along the stage.*] There now, that is a very pretty distance—a pretty gentleman's distance.

Acres. Zounds! we might as well fight in a sentry-box! I tell you, Sir Lucius, the farther he is off, the cooler I shall take my aim.

Sir Luc. Faith! then I suppose you would aim at him best of all if he was out of sight!

Acres. No, Sir Lucius; but I should think forty or eight and thirty yards——

Sir Luc. Pho! pho! nonsense! three or four feet between the mouths of your pistols is as good as a mile.

Acres. Odds bullets, no!—by my valour! there is no merit in killing him so near: do, my dear Sir Lucius, let me bring him down at a long shot:—a long shot, Sir Lucius, if you love me.

Sir Luc. Well, the gentleman's friend and I must settle that.—But tell me now, Mr. Acres, in case of an accident, is there any little will or commission I could execute for you?

Acres. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius—but I don't understand——

Sir Luc. Why, you may think there's no being shot at without a little risk—and if an unlucky bullet should carry a quietus with it—I say it will be no time then to be bothering you about family matters.

Acres. A quietus!

Sir Luc. For instance, now—if that should be the case—would you choose to be pickled and sent home?—or would it be the same to you to lie here in the Abbey?—I'm told there is very snug lying in the Abbey.

Acres. Pickled!—Snug lying in the Abbey!—Odds tremors! Sir Lucius, don't talk so!

Sir Luc. I suppose, Mr. Acres, you never were engaged in an affair of this kind before?

Acres. No, Sir Lucius, never before.

Sir Luc. Ah! that's a pity!—there's nothing like being used to a thing.—Pray now, how would you receive the gentleman's shot?

Acres. Odds files!—I've practised that—there, Sir Lucius—there.—[*Puts himself in an attitude.*] A side-front, hey? Odd! I'll make myself small enough: I'll stand edgeways.

Sir Luc. Now—you're quite out—for if you stand so when I take my aim—— [*Levelling at him.*

Acres. Zounds! Sir Lucius—are you sure it is not cocked?

Sir Luc. Never fear.

Acres. But—but—you don't know—it may go off of its own head!

Sir Luc. Pho! be easy.—Well, now if I hit you in the body, my bullet has a double chance—for if it misses a vital part of your right side—'twill be very hard if it don't succeed on the left!

Acres. A vital part!

Sir Luc. But, there—fix yourself so—[*Placing him*]—let him see the broad-side of your full front—there—now a ball or two may pass clean through your body, and never do any harm at all.

Acres. Clean through me!—a ball or two clean through me!

Sir Luc. Ay—may they—and it is much the genteelest attitude into the bargain.

Acres. Look'ee! Sir Lucius—I'd just as lieve be shot in an awkward posture as a genteel one; so, by my valour! I will stand edgeways.

Sir Luc. [*Looking at his watch.*] Sure they don't mean to disappoint us—Hah!—no, faith—I think I see them coming.

Acres. Hey!—what!—coming!——

Sir Luc. Ay.—Who are those yonder getting over the stile?

Acres. There are two of them indeed!—well—let them come—hey, Sir Lucius!—we—we—we—we—won't run.

Sir Luc. Run!

Acres. No—I say—we won't run, by my valour!

Sir Luc. What the devil's the matter with you?

Acres. Nothing—nothing—my dear friend—my dear Sir Lucius—but I—I—I don't feel quite so bold, somehow, as I did.

Sir Luc. O fy!—consider your honour.

Acres. Ay—true—my honour. Do, Sir Lucius, edge in a word or two every now and then about my honour.

Sir Luc. Well, here they're coming. [*Looking.*

Acres. Sir Lucius—if I wa'n't with you, I should almost think I was afraid.—If my valour should leave me!—Valour will come and go.

Sir Luc. Then pray keep it fast, while you have it.

Acres. Sir Lucius—I doubt it is going—yes—my valour is certainly going!—it is sneaking off!—I feel it oozing out as it were at the palms of my hands!

Sir Luc. Your honour—your honour.—Here they are.

Acres. O mercy!—now—that I was safe at Clod Hall! or could be shot before I was aware!

Enter FAULKLAND *and* CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Sir Luc. Gentlemen, your most obedient.—Hah!—what, Captain Absolute!—So, I suppose, sir, you are come here, just like myself—to do a kind office, first for your friend—then to proceed to business on your own account.

Acres. What, Jack!—my dear Jack!—my dear friend!

Abs. Hark'ee, Bob, Beverley's at hand.

Sir Luc. Well, Mr. Acres—I don't blame your saluting the gentleman civilly.—[*To* FAULKLAND.] So, Mr. Beverley, if you'll choose your weapons, the captain and I will measure the ground.

Faulk. My weapons, sir!

Acres. Odds life! Sir Lucius, I'm not going to fight Mr. Faulkland; these are my particular friends.

Sir Luc. What, sir, did you not come here to fight Mr. Acres?

Faulk. Not I, upon my word, sir.

Sir Luc. Well, now, that's mighty provoking! But I hope, Mr. Faulkland, as there are three of us come on purpose for the game, you won't be so cantanckerous as to spoil the party by sitting out.

Abs. O pray, Faulkland, fight to oblige Sir Lucius.

Faulk. Nay, if Mr. Acres is so bent on the matter——

Acres. No, no, Mr. Faulkland;—I'll bear my disappointment like a Christian.—Look'ee, Sir Lucius, there's no occasion at all for me to fight; and if it is the same to you, I'd as lieve let it alone.

Sir Luc. Observe me, Mr. Acres—I must not be trifled with. You have certainly challenged somebody—and you came here to fight him. Now, if that gentleman is willing to represent him—I can't see, for my soul, why it isn't just the same thing.

Acres. Why no—Sir Lucius—I tell you, 'tis one Beverley I've challenged—a fellow, you see, that dare not show his face! —If he were here, I'd make him give up his pretensions directly!

Abs. Hold, Bob—let me set you right—there is no such man as Beverley in the case.—The person who assumed that name is before you; and as his pretensions are the same in both characters, he is ready to support them in whatever way you please.

Sir Luc. Well, this is lucky.—Now you have an opportunity—

Acres. What, quarrel with my dear friend Jack Absolute?—not if he were fifty Beverleys! Zounds! Sir Lucius, you would not have me so unnatural.

Sir Luc. Upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, your valour has oozed away with a vengeance!

Acres. Not in the least! Odds backs and abettors! I'll be your second with all my heart—and if you should get a quietus, you may command me entirely. I'll get you snug lying in the Abbey here; or pickle you, and send you over to Blunderbuss-hall, or anything of the kind, with the greatest pleasure.

Sir Luc. Pho! pho! you are little better than a coward.

Acres. Mind, gentlemen, he calls me a coward; coward was the word, by my valour!

Sir Luc. Well, sir?

Acres. Look'ee, Sir Lucius, 'tisn't that I mind the word coward—coward may be said in joke—But if you had called me a poltroon, odds daggers and balls——

Sir Luc. Well, sir?

Acres. I should have thought you a very ill-bred man.

Sir Luc. Pho! you are beneath my notice.

Abs. Nay, Sir Lucius, you can't have a better second than my friend Acres—He is a most determined dog—called in the country, Fighting Bob.—He generally kills a man a week—don't you, Bob?

Acres. Ay—at home!

Sir Luc. Well, then, captain, 'tis we must begin—so come out, my little counsellor—[*Draws his sword.*]—and ask the gentleman, whether he will resign the lady, without forcing you to proceed against him?

Abs. Come on then, sir—[*Draws*]; since you won't let it be an amicable suit, here's my reply.

Enter SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE, DAVID, MRS. MALAPROP, LYDIA, *and* JULIA.

Dav. Knock 'em all down, sweet Sir Anthony; knock down my master in particular; and bind his hands over to their good behaviour!

Sir Anth. Put up, Jack, put up, or I shall be in a frenzy—how came you in a duel, sir?

Abs. Faith, sir, that gentleman can tell you better than I; 'twas he called on me, and you know, sir, I serve his majesty.

Sir Anth. Here's a pretty fellow; I catch him going to cut a man's throat, and he tells me he serves his majesty!—Zounds! sirrah, then how durst you draw the king's sword against one of his subjects?

Abs. Sir, I tell you! that gentleman called me out, without explaining his reasons.

Sir Anth. Gad! sir, how came you to call my son out, without explaining your reasons?

Sir Luc. Your son, sir, insulted me in a manner which my honour could not brook.

Sir Anth. Zounds! Jack, how durst you insult the gentleman in a manner which his honour could not brook?

Mrs. Mal. Come, come, let's have no honour before ladies—Captain Absolute, come here—How could you intimidate us so?—Here's Lydia has been terrified to death for you.

Abs. For fear I should be killed, or escape, ma'am?

Mrs. Mal. Nay, no delusions to the past—Lydia is convinced; speak, child.

Sir Luc. With your leave, ma'am, I must put in a word here: I believe I could interpret the young lady's silence. Now mark——

Lyd. What is it you mean, sir?

Sir Luc. Come, come, Delia, we must be serious now—this is no time for trifling.

Lyd. 'Tis true, sir; and your reproof bids me offer this gentleman my hand, and solicit the return of his affections.

Abs. O! my little angel, say you so!—Sir Lucius—I perceive there must be some mistake here, with regard to the affront which you affirm I have given you. I can only say that it could not have been intentional. And as you must be convinced, that I should not fear to support a real injury—you shall now see that I am not ashamed to atone for an inadvertency—I ask your pardon.—But for this lady, while honoured with her approbation, I will support my claim against any man whatever.

Sir Anth. Well said, Jack, and I'll stand by you, my boy.

Acres. Mind, I give up all my claim—I make no pretensions to any thing in the world; and if I can't get a wife without fighting for her, by my valour! I'll live a bachelor.

Sir Luc. Captain, give me your hand: an affront handsomely acknowledged becomes an obligation; and as for the lady, if she chooses to deny her own hand-writing, here——

[*Takes out letters.*

Mrs. Mal. O, he will dissolve my mystery!—Sir Lucius, perhaps there's some mistake—perhaps I can illuminate——

Sir Luc. Pray, old gentlewoman, don't interfere where you have no business.—Miss Languish, are you my Delia, or not?

Lyd. Indeed, Sir Lucius, I am not.

[*Walks aside with* CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Mrs. Mal. Sir Lucius O'Trigger—ungrateful as you are—I own the soft impeachment—pardon my blushes, I am Delia.

Sir Luc. You Delia—pho! pho! be easy.

Mrs. Mal. Why, thou barbarous Vandyke—those letters are mine—When you are more sensible of my benignity—perhaps I may be brought to encourage your addresses.

Sir Luc. Mrs. Malaprop, I am extremely sensible of your condescension; and whether you or Lucy have put this trick on me, I am equally beholden to you.—And, to show you I am not ungrateful, Captain Absolute, since you have taken that lady from me, I'll give you my Delia into the bargain.

Abs. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius; but here's my friend, Fighting Bob, unprovided for.

Sir Luc. Hah! little Valour—here, will you make your fortune?

Acres. Odds wrinkles! No.—But give me your hand, Sir

Lucius, forget and forgive; but if ever I give you a chance of pickling me again, say Bob Acres is a dunce, that's all.

Sir Anth. Come, Mrs. Malaprop, don't be cast down—you are in your bloom yet.

Mrs. Mal. O Sir Anthony—men are all barbarians.

[*All retire but* JULIA *and* FAULKLAND.

Jul. [*Aside.*] He seems dejected and unhappy—not sullen; there was some foundation, however, for the tale he told me—O woman! how true should be your judgment, when your resolution is so weak!

Faulk. Julia!—how can I sue for what I so little deserve? I dare not presume—yet Hope is the child of Penitence.

Jul. Oh! Faulkland, you have not been more faulty in your unkind treatment of me, than I am now in wanting inclination to resent it. As my heart honestly bids me place my weakness to the account of love, I should be ungenerous not to admit the same plea for yours.

Faulk. Now I shall be blest indeed!

Sir Anth. [*Coming forward.*] What's going on here?—So you have been quarrelling too, I warrant! Come, Julia, I never interfered before; but let me have a hand in the matter at last.—All the faults I have ever seen in my friend Faulkland seemed to proceed from what he calls the delicacy and warmth of his affection for you—There, marry him directly, Julia; you'll find he'll mend surprisingly! [*The rest come forward.*

Sir Luc. Come, now, I hope there is no dissatisfied person, but what is content; for as I have been disappointed myself, it will be very hard if I have not the satisfaction of seeing other people succeed better.

Acres. You are right, Sir Lucius.—So Jack, I wish you joy—Mr. Faulkland the same.—Ladies,—come now, to show you I'm neither vexed nor angry, odds tabors and pipes! I'll order the fiddles in half an hour to the New Rooms—and I insist on your all meeting me there.

Sir Anth. 'Gad! sir, I like your spirit; and at night we single lads will drink a health to the young couples, and a husband to Mrs. Malaprop.

Faulk. Our partners are stolen from us, Jack—I hope to be congratulated by each other—yours for having checked in time the errors of an ill-directed imagination, which might have betrayed an innocent heart; and mine, for having, by her gentleness and candour, reformed the unhappy temper of one, who by it made wretched whom he loved most, and tortured the heart he ought to have adored.

Abs. Well, Jack, we have both tasted the bitters, as well as the sweets of love; with this difference only, that you always prepared the bitter cup for yourself, while I——

Lyd. Was always obliged to me for it, hey! Mr. Modesty? ——But come, no more of that—our happiness is now as unalloyed as general.

Jul. Then let us study to preserve it so: and while Hope pictures to us a flattering scene of future bliss, let us deny its pencil those colours which are too bright to be lasting.—When hearts deserving happiness would unite their fortunes, Virtue would crown them with an unfading garland of modest hurtless flowers; but ill-judging Passion will force the gaudier rose into the wreath, whose thorn offends them when its leaves are dropped! [*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

BY THE AUTHOR.

SPOKEN BY MRS. BULKLEY.

LADIES, for you—I heard our poet say—
He'd try to coax some moral from his play:
"One moral's plain," cried I, "without more fuss;
Man's social happiness all rests on us:
Through all the drama—whether damn'd or not—
Love gilds the scene, and women guide the plot.
From every rank obedience is our due—
D'ye doubt?—The world's great stage shall prove it true."

The cit, well skill'd to shun domestic strife,
Will sup abroad; but first he'll ask his wife:
John Trot, his friend, for once will do the same,
But then—he'll just step home to tell his dame.

The surly squire at noon resolves to rule,
And half the day—Zounds! madam is a fool!
Convinced at night, the vanquish'd victor says,
Ah, Kate! you women have such coaxing ways.

The jolly toper chides each tardy blade,
Till reeling Bacchus calls on Love for aid:
Then with each toast he sees fair bumpers swim,
And kisses Chloe on the sparkling brim!

Nay, I have heard that statesmen—great and wise—
Will sometimes counsel with a lady's eyes!

The servile suitors watch her various face,
She smiles preferment, or she frowns disgrace,
Curtsies a pension here—there nods a place.
Nor with less awe, in scenes of humbler life,
Is view'd the mistress, or is heard the wife.
The poorest peasant of the poorest soil,
The child of poverty, and heir to toil,
Early from radiant Love's impartial light
Steals one small spark to cheer this world of night;
Dear spark! that oft through winter's chilling woes
Is all the warmth his little cottage knows!
The wandering tar, who not for years has press'd,
The widow'd partner of his day of rest,
On the cold deck, far from her arms removed,
Still hums the ditty which his Susan loved;
And while around the cadence rude is blown,
The boatswain whistles in a softer tone.
The soldier, fairly proud of wounds and toil,
Pants for the triumph of his Nancy's smile!
But ere the battle should he list her cries,
The lover trembles—and the hero dies!
That heart, by war and honour steel'd to fear,
Droops on a sigh, and sickens at a tear!
But ye more cautious, ye nice-judging few,
Who give to beauty only beauty's due,
Though friends to love—ye view with deep regret
Our conquests marr'd, our triumphs incomplete,
Till polish'd wit more lasting charms disclose,
And judgment fix the darts which beauty throws!
In female breasts did sense and merit rule,
The lover's mind would ask no other school;
Shamed into sense, the scholars of our eyes,
Our beaux from gallantry would soon be wise;
Would gladly light, their homage to improve,
The lamp of knowledge at the torch of love!

ST. PATRICK'S DAY;

OR, THE SCHEMING LIEUTENANT.

A FARCE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AS ORIGINALLY ACTED AT COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE IN 1775.

LIEUTENANT O'CONNOR	*Mr. Clinch.*	LAURETTA . .	*Mrs. Cargill.*
DR. ROSY . .	*Mr. Quick.*	MRS. BRIDGET CREDULOUS	*Mrs. Pitt.*
JUSTICE CREDULOUS	*Mr. Lee Lewes.*		
SERJEANT TROUNCE	*Mr. Booth.*	Drummer, Soldiers, Countrymen, *and* Servant.	
CORPORAL FLINT .			

SCENE.—A TOWN IN ENGLAND.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—LIEUTENANT O'CONNOR'S *Lodgings.*
Enter SERJEANT TROUNCE, CORPORAL FLINT, *and four* SOLDIERS.

1 *Sol.* I say you are wrong; we should all speak together, each for himself, and all at once, that we may be heard the better.

2 *Sol.* Right, Jack, we'll argue in platoons.

3 *Sol.* Ay, ay, let him have our grievances in a volley, and if we be to have a spokesman, there's the corporal is the lieutenant's countryman, and knows his humour.

Flint. Let me alone for that. I served three years, within a bit, under his honour, in the Royal Inniskillions, and I never will see a sweeter tempered gentleman, nor one more free with his purse. I put a great shammock in his hat this morning, and I'll be bound for him he'll wear it, was it as big as Steven's Green.

4 *Sol.* I say again then you talk like youngsters, like militia striplings: there's a discipline, look'ee in all things, whereof the serjeant must be our guide; he's a gentleman of words; he understands your foreign lingo, your figures, and such like auxiliaries in scoring. Confess now for a reckoning, whether in chalk or writing, ben't he your only man?

Flint. Why the serjeant is a scholar to be sure, and has the gift of reading.

Trounce. Good soldiers, and fellow-gentlemen, if you make

me your spokesman, you will show the more judgment; and let me alone for the argument. I'll be as loud as a drum, and point blank from the purpose.

All. Agreed, agreed.

Flint. Oh, fait! here comes the lieutenant.—Now, Serjeant.

Trounce. So then, to order.—Put on your mutiny looks; every man grumble a little to himself, and some of you hum the Deserter's March.

Enter LIEUTENANT O'CONNOR.

O'Con. Well, honest lads, what is it you have to complain of?

Sol. Ahem! hem!

Trounce. So please your honour, the very grievance of the matter is this:—ever since your honour differed with Justice Credulous, our inn-keepers use us most scurvily. By my halbert, their treatment is such, that if your spirit was willing to put up with it, flesh and blood could by no means agree; so we humbly petition that your honour would make an end of the matter at once, by running away with the justice's daughter, or else get us fresh quarters,—hem! hem!

O'Con. Indeed! Pray which of the houses use you ill?

1 *Sol.* There's the Red Lion an't half the civility of the old Red Lion.

2 *Sol.* There's the White Horse, if he wasn't casehardened, ought to be ashamed to show his face.

O'Con. Very well; the Horse and the Lion shall answer for it at the quarter sessions.

Trounce. The two Magpies are civil enough; but the Angel uses us like devils, and the Rising Sun refuses us light to go to bed by.

O'Con. Then, upon my word, I'll have the Rising Sun put down, and the Angel shall give security for his good behaviour; but are you sure you do nothing to quit scores with them?

Flint. Nothing at all, your honour, unless now and then we happen to fling a cartridge into the kitchen fire, or put a spatterdash or so into the soup; and sometimes Ned drums up and down stairs a little of a night.

O'Con. Oh, all that's fair; but hark'ee, lads, I must have no grumbling on St. Patrick's day; so here, take this, and divide it amongst you. But observe me now,—show yourselves men of spirit, and don't spend sixpence of it in drink.

Trounce. Nay, hang it, your honour, soldiers should never bear malice; we must drink St. Patrick's and your honour's health.

All. Oh, damn malice! St. Patrick's and his honour's by all means.

Flint. Come away, then, lads, and first we'll parade round the Market-cross, for the honour of King George.

1 *Sol.* Thank your honour.—Come along; St. Patrick, his honour, and strong beer for ever! [*Exeunt* SOLDIERS.

O'Con. Get along, you thoughtless vagabonds! yet, upon my conscience, 'tis very hard these poor fellows should scarcely have bread from the soil they would die to defend.

Enter DOCTOR ROSY.

Ah, my little Dr. Rosy, my Galen a-bridge, what's the news?

Rosy. All things are as they were, my Alexander; the justice is as violent as ever: I felt his pulse on the matter again, and, thinking his rage began to intermit, I wanted to throw in the bark of good advice, but it would not do. He says you and your cut-throats have a plot upon his life, and swears he had rather see his daughter in a scarlet fever than in the arms of a soldier.

O'Con. Upon my word the army is very much obliged to him. Well, then, I must marry the girl first, and ask his consent afterwards.

Rosy. So, then, the case of her fortune is desperate, hey?

O'Con. Oh, hang fortune,—let that take its chance; there is a beauty in Lauretta's simplicity, so pure a bloom upon her charms.

Rosy. So there is, so there is. You are for beauty as nature made her, hey! No artificial graces, no cosmetic varnish, no beauty in grain, hey!

O'Con. Upon my word, doctor, you are right; the London ladies were always too handsome for me; then they are so defended, such a circumvallation of hoop, with a breastwork of whale-bone that would turn a pistol-bullet, much less Cupid's arrows,—then turret on turret on top, with stores of concealed weapons, under pretence of black pins,—and above all, a standard of feathers that would do honour to a knight of the Bath. Upon my conscience, I could as soon embrace an Amazon, armed at all points.

Rosy. Right, right, my Alexander! my taste to a tittle.

O'Con. Then, doctor, though I admire modesty in women, I like to see their faces. I am for the changeable rose; but with one of these quality Amazons, if their midnight dissipations had left them blood enough to raise a blush, they have not room enough in their cheeks to show it. To be sure, bash-

fulness is a very pretty thing; but, in my mind, there is nothing on earth so impudent as an everlasting blush.

Rosy. My taste, my taste!—Well, Lauretta is none of these. Ah! I never see her but she puts me in mind of my poor dear wife.

O'Con. Ay, faith; in my opinion she can't do a worse thing. Now he is going to bother me about an old hag that has been dead these six years. [*Aside.*

Rosy. Oh, poor Dolly! I never shall see her like again; such an arm for a bandage—veins that seemed to invite the lancet. Then her skin, smooth and white as a gallipot; her mouth as round and not larger than the mouth of a penny phial; her lips conserve of roses; and then her teeth—none of your sturdy fixtures—ache as they would, it was but a small pull, and out they came. I believe I have drawn half a score of her poor dear pearls—[*weeps*]—But what avails her beauty? Death has no consideration—one must die as well as another.

O'Con. [*Aside.*] Oh, if he begins to moralize——

[*Takes out his snuff-box.*

Rosy. Fair and ugly, crooked or straight, rich or poor—flesh is grass—flowers fade!

O'Con. Here, doctor, take a pinch, and keep up your spirits.

Rosy. True, true, my friend; grief can't mend the matter—all's for the best; but such a woman was a great loss, lieutenant.

O'Con. To be sure, for doubtless she had mental accomplishments equal to her beauty.

Rosy. Mental accomplishments! she would have stuffed an alligator, or pickled a lizard, with any apothecary's wife in the kingdom. Why, she could decipher a prescription, and invent the ingredients, almost as well as myself: then she was such a hand at making foreign waters!—for Seltzer, Pyrmont, Islington, or Chalybeate, she never had her equal; and her Bath and Bristol springs exceeded the originals.—Ah, poor Dolly! she fell a martyr to her own discoveries.

O'Con. How so, pray?

Rosy. Poor soul! her illness was occasioned by her zeal in trying an improvement on the Spa-water, by an infusion of rum and acid.

O'Con. Ay, ay, spirits never agree with water-drinkers.

Rosy. No, no, you mistake. Rum agreed with her well enough; it was not the rum that killed the poor dear creature, for she died of a dropsy. Well, she is gone, never to return, and has left no pledge of our loves behind. No little babe, to

hang like a label round papa's neck. Well, well, we are all mortal—sooner or later—flesh is grass—flowers fade.

O'Con. Oh, the devil!—again! [*Aside.*

Rosy. Life's a shadow—the world a stage—we strut an hour.

O'Con. Here, doctor. [*Offers snuff.*

Rosy. True, true, my friend: well, high grief can't cure it. All's for the best, hey! my little Alexander?

O'Con. Right, right; an apothecary should never be out of spirits. But come, faith, 'tis time honest Humphrey should wait on the justice; that must be our first scheme.

Rosy. True, true; you should be ready: the clothes are at my house, and I have given you such a character that he is impatient to have you: he swears you shall be his body-guard. Well, I honour the army, or I should never do so much to serve you.

O'Con. Indeed I am bound to you for ever, doctor; and when once I'm possessed of my dear Lauretta, I will endeavour to make work for you as fast as possible.

Rosy. Now you put me in mind of my poor wife again.

O'Con. Ah, pray forget her a little: we shall be too late.

Rosy. Poor Dolly!

O'Con. 'Tis past twelve.

Rosy. Inhuman dropsy!

O'Con. The justice will wait.

Rosy. Cropped in her prime!

O'Con. For Heaven's sake, come!

Rosy. Well, flesh is grass.

O'Con. O, the devil!

Rosy. We must all die——

O'Con. Doctor!

Rosy. Kings, lords, and common whores——

[*Exeunt*, LIEUTENANT O'CONNOR *forcing* ROSY *off.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* JUSTICE CREDULOUS' *House.*

Enter LAURETTA *and* MRS. BRIDGET CREDULOUS.

Lau. I repeat it again, mamma, officers are the prettiest men in the world, and Lieutenant O'Connor is the prettiest officer I ever saw.

Mrs. Bri. For shame, Laura! how can you talk so?—or if you must have a military man, there's Lieutenant Plow, or Captain Haycock, or Major Dray, the brewer, are all your admirers; and though they are peaceable, good kind of men, they have as large cockades, and become scarlet, as well as the fighting folks.

Lau. Psha! you know, mamma, I hate militia officers; a set of dunghill cocks with spurs on—heroes scratched off a church door—clowns in military masquerade, wearing the dress without supporting the character. No, give me the bold upright youth, who makes love to-day, and his head shot off to-morrow. Dear! to think how the sweet fellows sleep on the ground, and fight in silk stockings and lace ruffles.

Mrs. Bri. Oh, barbarous! to want a husband that may wed you to-day, and be sent the Lord knows where before night; then in a twelvemonth perhaps to have him come like a Colossus, with one leg at New York and the other at Chelsea Hospital.

Lau. Then I'll be his crutch, mamma.

Mrs. Bri. No, give me a husband that knows where his limbs are, though he want the use of them:—and if he should take you with him, to sleep in a baggage-cart, and stroll about the camp like a gipsy, with a knapsack and two children at your back;—then, by way of entertainment in the evening, to make a party with the serjeant's wife to drink bohea tea, and play at all-fours on a drumhead:—'tis a precious life, to be sure!

Lau. Nay, mamma, you shouldn't be against my lieutenant, for I heard him say you were the best natured and best looking woman in the world.

Mrs. Bri. Why, child, I never said but that Lieutenant O'Connor was a very well-bred and discerning young man; 'tis your papa is so violent against him.

Lau. Why, Cousin Sophy married an officer.

Mrs. Bri. Ay, Laury, an officer in the militia.

Lau. No, indeed, ma'am, a marching regiment.

Mrs. Bri. No, child, I tell you he was major of militia.

Lau. Indeed, mamma, it wasn't.

Enter JUSTICE CREDULOUS.

Just. Bridget, my love, I have had a message.

Lau. It was Cousin Sophy told me so.

Just. I have had a message, love——

Mrs. Bri. No, child she would say no such thing.

Just. A message, I say.

Lau. How could he be in the militia, when he was ordered abroad?

Mrs. Bri. Ay, girl, hold your tongue!—Well, my dear.

Just. I have had a message from Doctor Rosy.

Mrs. Bri. He ordered abroad! He went abroad for his health.

Just. Why, Bridget!——

Mrs. Bri. Well, deary.—Now hold your tongue, miss.

Just. A message from Dr. Rosy, and Dr. Rosy says——

Lau. I'm sure, mamma, his regimentals——

Just. Damn his regimentals!—Why don't you listen?

Mrs. Bri. Ay, girl, how durst you interrupt your papa?

Lau. Well, papa.

Just. Doctor Rosy says he'll bring——

Lau. Were blue turned up with red, mamma.

Just. Laury!—says he will bring the young man——

Mrs. Bri. Red! yellow, if you please, miss.

Just. Bridget!—the young man that is to be hired——

Mrs. Bri. Besides, miss, it is very unbecoming in you to want to have the last word with your mamma; you should know——

Just. Why, zounds! will you hear me or no?

Mrs. Bri. I am listening, my love, I am listening!—But what signifies my silence, what good is my not speaking a word, if this girl will interrupt and let nobody speak but herself?—Ay, I don't wonder, my life, at your impatience; your poor dear lips quiver to speak; but I suppose she'll run on, and not let you put in a word.—You may very well be angry; there is nothing, sure, so provoking as a chattering, talking——

Lau. Nay, I'm sure, mamma, it is you will not let papa speak now.

Mrs. Bri. Why, you little provoking minx——

Just. Get out of the room directly, both of you—get out!

Mrs. Bri. Ay, go, girl.

Just. Go, Bridget, you are worse than she, you old hag. I wish you were both up to the neck in the canal, to argue there till I took you out.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Doctor Rosy, sir.

Just. Show him up. [*Exit* SERVANT.

Lau. Then you own, mamma, it was a marching regiment?

Mrs. Bri. You're an obstinate fool, I tell you; for if that had been the case——

Just. You won't go?

Mrs. Bri. We are going, Mr. Surly.—If that had been the case, I say, how could——

Lau. Nay, mamma, one proof——

Mrs. Bri. How could Major——

Lau. And a full proof——

[JUSTICE CREDULOUS *drives them off*

Just. There they go, ding dong in for the day. Good lack! a fluent tongue is the only thing a mother don't like her daughter to resemble her in.

Enter DOCTOR ROSY.

Well, doctor, where's the lad—where's Trusty?

Rosy. At hand; he'll be here in a minute, I'll answer for't. He's such a one as you an't met with,—brave as a lion, gentle as a saline draught.

Just. Ah, he comes in the place of a rogue, a dog that was corrupted by the lieutenant. But this is a sturdy fellow, is he, doctor?

Rosy. As Hercules; and the best back-sword in the country. Egad, he'll make the red-coats keep their distance.

Just. O the villains; this is St. Patrick's day, and the rascals have been parading my house all the morning. I know they have a design upon me; but I have taken all precautions: I have magazines of arms, and if this fellow does but prove faithful, I shall be more at ease.

Rosy. Doubtless he'll be a comfort to you.

Re-enter SERVANT.

Ser. There is a man below, sir, inquires for Doctor Rosy.

Rosy. Show him up.

Just. Hold! a little caution—How does he look?

Ser. A country-looking fellow, your worship.

Just. Oh, well, well, for Doctor Rosy; these rascals try all ways to get in here.

Ser. Yes, please your worship; there was one here this morning wanted to speak to you; he said his name was Corporal Breakbones.

Just. Corporal Breakbones!

Ser. And drummer Crackskull came again.

Just. Ay, did you ever hear of such a damned confounded crew? Well, show the lad in here! [*Exit* SERVANT.

Rosy. Ay, he'll be your porter; he'll give the rogues an answer.

Enter LIEUTENANT O'CONNOR, *disguised.*

Just. So, a tall—Efacks! what! has lost an eye?

Rosy. Only a bruise he got in taking seven or eight highwaymen.

Just. He has a damned wicked leer somehow with the other.

Rosy. Oh, no, he's bashful—a sheepish look——

Just. Well, my lad, what's your name?

O'Con. Humphrey Hum.

Just. Hum—I don't like Hum!

O'Con. But I be mostly called honest Humphrey——

Rosy. There, I told you so, of noted honesty.

Just. Well, honest Humphrey, the doctor has told you my terms, and you are willing to serve, hey?

O'Con. And please your worship I shall be well content.

Just. Well, then, hark'ye, honest Humphrey,—you are sure now you will never be a rogue—never take a bribe, hey, honest Humphrey?

O'Con. A bribe! What's that?

Just. A very ignorant fellow indeed!

Rosy. His worship hopes you will not part with your honesty for money.

O'Con. Noa, noa.

Just. Well said, Humphrey—my chief business with you is to watch the motions of a rake-helly fellow here, one Lieutenant O'Connor.

Rosy. Ay, you don't value the soldiers, do you, Humphrey?

O'Con. Not I; they are but zwaggerers, and you'll see they'll be as much afraid of me as they would of their captain.

Just. And i'faith, Humphrey, you have a pretty cudgel there!

O'Con. Ay, the zwitch is better than nothing, but I should be glad of a stouter: ha' you got such a thing in the house as an old coach-pole, or a spare bed-post?

Just. Oons! what a dragon it is!—Well, Humphrey, come with me.—I'll just show him to Bridget, doctor, and we'll agree. —Come along, honest Humphrey. [*Exit.*

O'Con. My dear doctor, now remember to bring the justice presently to the walk: I have a scheme to get into his confidence at once.

Rosy. I will, I will. [*They shake hands.*

Re-enter JUSTICE CREDULOUS.

Just. Why, honest Humphrey, hey! what the devil are you at?

Rosy. I was just giving him a little advice.—Well, I must go for the present.—Good-morning to your worship—you need not fear the lieutenant while he is in your house.

Just. Well, get in, Humphrey. Good-morning to you, doctor.—[*Exit* DOCTOR ROSY.] Come along, Humphrey.—Now I think I am a match for the lieutenant and all his gang.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Street.*

Enter SERJEANT TROUNCE, DRUMMER, *and* SOLDIERS.

Trounce. Come, silence your drum—there is no valour stirring to-day. I thought St. Patrick would have given us a recruit or two to-day.

Sol. Mark, serjeant!

Enter two COUNTRYMEN.

Trounce. Oh! these are the lads I was looking for; they have the look of gentlemen.—An't you single, my lads?

1 *Coun.* Yes, an please you, I be quite single: my relations be all dead, thank heavens, more or less. I have but one poor mother left in the world, and she's an helpless woman.

Trounce. Indeed! a very extraordinary case—quite your own master then—the fitter to serve his Majesty.—Can you read?

1 *Coun.* Noa, I was always too lively to take to learning; but John here is main clever at it.

Trounce. So, what you're a scholar, friend?

2 *Coun.* I was born so, measter. Feyther kept grammar-school.

Trounce. Lucky man—in a campaign or two put yourself down chaplain to the regiment. And I warrant you have read of warriors and heroes?

2 *Coun.* Yes, that I have: I have read of Jack the Giant-killer, and the Dragon of Wantly, and the—Noa, I believe that's all in the hero way, except once about a comet.

Trounce. Wonderful knowledge!—Well, my heroes, I'll write word to the king of your good intentions, and meet me half an hour hence at the Two Magpies.

Coun. We will, your honour, we will.

Trounce. But stay; for fear I shouldn't see you again in the crowd, clap these little bits of ribbon into your hats.

1 *Coun.* Our hats are none of the best.

Trounce. Well, meet me at the Magpies, and I'll give you money to buy new ones.

Coun. Bless your honour, thank your honour. [*Exeunt.*

Trounce. [*Winking at* SOLDIERS.] Jack! [*Exeunt* SOLDIERS.

Enter LIEUTENANT O'CONNOR.

So, here comes one would make a grenadier—Stop, friend, will you list?

O'Con. Who shall I serve under?

Trounce. Under me, to be sure.

O'Con. Isn't Lieutenant O'Connor your officer?

Trounce. He is, and I am commander over him.

O'Con. What! be you serjeants greater than your captains?

Trounce. To be sure we are; 'tis our business to keep them in order. For instance, now, the general writes to me, dear Serjeant, or dear Trounce, or dear Serjeant Trounce, according to his hurry, if your lieutenant does not demean himself, accordingly let me know.—Yours, General Deluge.

O'Con. And do you complain of him often?

Trounce. No, hang him, the lad is good-natured at the bottom, so I pass over small things. But hark'ee, between ourselves, he is most confoundedly given to wenching.

Enter CORPORAL FLINT.

Flint. Please your honour, the doctor is coming this way with his worship—We are all ready, and have our cues. [*Exit.*

O'Con. Then, my dear Trounce, or my dear Serjeant, or my dear Serjeant Trounce, take yourself away.

Trounce. Zounds! the lieutenant—I smell of the black hole already. [*Exit.*

Enter JUSTICE CREDULOUS *and* DOCTOR ROSY.

Just. I thought I saw some of the cut-throats.

Rosy. I fancy not; there's no one but honest Humphrey. Ha! Odds life, here come some of them—we'll stay by these trees, and let them pass.

Just. Oh, the bloody-looking dogs!

[*Walks aside with* DOCTOR ROSY.

Re-enter CORPORAL FLINT *and two* SOLDIERS.

Flint. Halloa, friend! do you serve Justice Credulous?

O'Con. I do.

Flint. Are you rich?

O'Con. Noa.

Flint. Nor ever will be with that old stingy booby. Look here—take it. [*Gives him a purse.*

O'Con. What must I do for this?

Flint. Mark me, our lieutenant is in love with the old rogue's daughter: help us to break his worship's bones, and carry off the girl, and you are a made man.

O'Con. I'll see you hanged first, you pack of skurry villains!

[*Throws away the purse.*

Flint. What, sirrah, do you mutiny? Lay hold of him

O'Con. Nay then, I'll try your armour for you. [*Beats them.*

All. Oh! oh!—quarter! quarter!

[*Exeunt* CORPORAL FLINT *and* SOLDIERS.

Just. [*Coming forward.*] Trim them, trounce them, break their bones, honest Humphrey—What a spirit he has!

Rosy. Aquafortis.

O'Con. Betray your master!

Rosy. What a miracle of fidelity!

Just. Ay, and it shall not go unrewarded—I'll give him sixpence on the spot. Here, honest Humphrey, there's for yourself: as for this bribe, [*takes up the purse,*] such trash is best in the hands of justice. Now then, doctor, I think I may trust him to guard the women: while he is with them I may go out with safety.

Rosy. Doubtless you may—I'll answer for the lieutenant's behaviour whilst honest Humphrey is with your daughter.

Just. Ay, ay, she shall go nowhere without him. Come along, honest Humphrey. How rare it is to meet with such a servant! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Garden.*

LAURETTA *discovered.* *Enter* JUSTICE CREDULOUS *and* LIEUTENANT O'CONNOR.

Just. Why, you little truant, how durst you wander so far from the house without my leave? Do you want to invite that scoundrel lieutenant to scale the walls and carry you off?

Lau. Lud, papa, you are so apprehensive for nothing.

Just. Why, hussy——

Lau. Well then, I can't bear to be shut up all day so like a nun. I am sure it is enough to make one wish to be run away with—and I wish I was run away with—I do—and I wish the lieutenant knew it.

Just. You do, do you, hussy? Well, I think I'll take pretty good care of you. Here, Humphrey, I leave this lady in your care. Now you may walk about the garden, Miss Pert; but Humphrey shall go with you wherever you go. So mind, honest Humphrey, I am obliged to go abroad for a little while; let no one but yourself come near her; don't be shame-faced, you booby, but keep close to her. And now, miss, let your lieutenant or any of his crew come near you if they can. [*Exit.*

Lau. How this booby stares after him! [*Sits down and sings.*

O'Con. Lauretta!

Lau. Not so free, fellow! [*Sings.*

O'Con. Lauretta! look on me.

Lau. Not so free, fellow!

O'Con. No recollection!

Lau. Honest Humphrey, be quiet.

O'Con. Have you forgot your faithful soldier?

Lau. Ah! Oh preserve me!

O'Con. 'Tis, my soul! your truest slave, passing on your father in this disguise.

Lau. Well now, I declare this is charming—you are so disguised, my dear lieutenant, and you look so delightfully ugly. I am sure no one will find you out, ha! ha! ha!—You know I am under your protection; papa charged you to keep close to me.

O'Con. True, my angel, and thus let me fulfil——

Lau. O pray now, dear Humphrey——

O'Con. Nay, 'tis but what old Mittimus commanded.

[*Offers to kiss her.*

Re-enter JUSTICE CREDULOUS.

Just. Laury, my—hey! what the devil's here?

Lau. Well now, one kiss, and be quiet.

Just. Your very humble servant, honest Humphrey! Don't let me—pray don't let me interrupt you!

Lau. Lud, papa! Now that's so good-natured—indeed there's no harm. You did not mean any rudeness, did you, Humphrey?

O'Con. No, indeed, miss; his worship knows it is not in me.

Just. I know that you are a lying, canting, hypocritical scoundrel; and if you don't take yourself out of my sight——

Lau. Indeed, papa, now I'll tell you how it was. I was sometime taken with a sudden giddiness, and Humphrey seeing me beginning to totter, ran to my assistance, quite frightened, poor fellow, and took me in his arms.

Just. Oh! was that all—nothing but a little giddiness, hey!

O'Con. That's all, indeed, your worship; for seeing miss change colour, I ran up instantly.

Just. Oh, 'twas very kind in you!

O'Con. And luckily recovered her.

Just. And who made you a doctor, you impudent rascal, hey? Get out of my sight, I say, this instant, or by all the statutes——

Lau. Oh now, papa, you frighten me, and I am giddy again! —Oh, help!

O'Con. O dear lady, she'll fall! [*Takes her into his arms.*

Just. Zounds! what before my face—why then, thou miracle

of impudence!—[*Lays hold of him and discovers him.*]—Mercy on me, who have we here?—Murder! Robbery! Fire! Rape! Gunpowder! Soldiers! John! Susan! Bridget!

O'Con. Good sir, don't be alarmed; I mean you no harm.

Just. Thieves! Robbers! Soldiers!

O'Con. You know my love for your daughter——

Just. Fire! Cut-throats!

O'Con. And that alone——

Just. Treason! Gunpowder!

Enter a SERVANT *with a blunderbuss.*

Now, scoundrel! let her go this instant.

Lau. O papa, you'll kill me!

Just. Honest Humphrey, be advised. Ay, miss, this way, if you please.

O'Con. Nay, sir, but hear me——

Just. I'll shoot.

O'Con. And you'll be convinced——

Just. I'll shoot.

O'Con. How injurious——

Just. I'll shoot—and so your very humble servant, honest Humphrey Hum. [*Exeunt separately.*

SCENE III.—*A Walk.*

Enter DOCTOR ROSY.

Rosy. Well, I think my friend is now in a fair way of succeeding. Ah! I warrant he is full of hope and fear, doubt and anxiety; truly he has the fever of love strong upon him: faint, peevish, languishing all day, with burning, restless nights. Ah! just my case when I pined for my poor dear Dolly! when she used to have her daily colics, and her little doctor be sent for. Then would I interpret the language of her pulse—declare my own sufferings in my receipt for her—send her a pearl necklace in a pill-box, or a cordial draught with an acrostic on the label. Well, those days are over: no happiness lasting: all is vanity—now sunshine, now cloudy—we are, as it were, king and beggar—then what avails——

Enter LIEUTENANT O'CONNOR.

O'Con. O doctor! ruined and undone.

Rosy. The pride of beauty——

O'Con. I am discovered, and——

Rosy. The gaudy palace——

O'Con. The justice is——

Rosy. The pompous wig——

O'Con. Is more enraged than ever.

Rosy. The gilded cane——

O'Con. Why, doctor! [*Slapping him on the shoulder.*

Rosy. Hey!

O'Con. Confound your morals! I tell you I am discovered, discomfited, disappointed.

Rosy. Indeed! Good lack, good lack, to think of the instability of human affairs! Nothing certain in this world—most deceived when most confident—fools of fortune all.

O'Con. My dear doctor, I want at present a little practical wisdom. I am resolved this instant to try the scheme we were going to put in execution last week. I have the letter ready, and only want your assistance to recover my ground.

Rosy. With all my heart—I'll warrant you I'll bear a part in it: but how the deuce were you discovered?

O'Con. I'll tell you as we go; there's not a moment to be lost.

Rosy. Heaven send we succeed better!—but there's no knowing.

O'Con. Very true.

Rosy. We may and we may not.

O'Con. Right.

Rosy. Time must show.

O'Con. Certainly.

Rosy. We are but blind guessers.

O'Con. Nothing more.

Rosy. Thick-sighted mortals.

O'Con. Remarkably.

Rosy. Wandering in error.

O'Con. Even so.

Rosy. Futurity is dark.

O'Con. As a cellar.

Rosy. Men are moles.

Exeunt LIEUTENANT O'CONNOR *forcing out* ROSY.

SCENE IV.—*A Room in* JUSTICE CREDULOUS' *House.*

Enter JUSTICE CREDULOUS *and* MRS. BRIDGET CREDULOUS.

Just. Odds life, Bridget, you are enough to make one mad! I tell you he would have deceived a chief justice: the dog seemed as ignorant as my clerk, and talked of honesty as if he had been a churchwarden.

Mrs. Bri. Pho! nonsense, honesty!—what had you to do,

pray, with honesty? A fine business you have made of it with your Humphrey Hum; and miss, too, she must have been privy to it. Lauretta! ay, you would have her called so; but for my part I never knew any good come of giving girls these heathen Christian names: if you had called her Deborah, or Tabitha, or Ruth, or Rebecca, or Joan, nothing of this had ever happened; but I always knew Lauretta was a runaway name.

Just. Psha, you're a fool!

Mrs. Bri. No, Mr. Credulous, it is you who are a fool, and no one but such a simpleton would be so imposed on.

Just. Why, sounds, madam, how durst you talk so? If you have no respect for your husband, I should think *unus quorum* might command a little deference.

Mrs. Bri. Don't tell me!—Unus fiddlestick! you ought to be ashamed to show your face at the sessions; you'll be a laughing-stock to the whole bench, and a byword with all the pig-tailed lawyers and bag-wigged attorneys about town.

Just. Is this language for his majesty's representative? By the statutes, it's high treason and petty treason, both at once!

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. A letter for your worship.

Just. Who brought it.

Ser. A soldier.

Just. Take it away and burn it.

Mrs. Bri. Stay!—Now you're in such a hurry—it is some canting scrawl from the lieutenant, I suppose.—[*Takes the letter.*—*Exit* SERVANT.] Let me see:—ay, 'tis signed O'Connor.

Just. Well, come read it out.

Mrs. Bri. [*Reads.*] *Revenge is sweet.*

Just. It begins so, does it? I'm glad of that; I'll let the dog know I'm of his opinion.

Mrs. Bri. [*Reads.*] *And though disappointed of my designs upon your daughter, I have still the satisfaction of knowing I am revenged on her unnatural father; for this morning, in your chocolate, I had the pleasure to administer to you a dose of poison.*—Mercy on us!

Just. No tricks, Bridget; come, you know it is not so; you know it is a lie.

Mrs. Bri. Read it yourself.

Just. [*Reads.*] *Pleasure to administer a dose of poison!*—Oh, horrible! Cut-throat villain!—Bridget!

Mrs. Bri. Lovee, stay, here's a postscript.—[*Reads.*] *N.B. 'Tis not in the power of medicine to save you.*

Just. Odds my life, Bridget! why don't you call for help? I've lost my voice.—My brain is giddy—I shall burst, and no assistance.—John!—Laury!—John!

Mrs. Bri. You see, lovee, what you have brought on yourself.

Re-enter SERVANT.

Ser. Your worship!

Just. Stay, John; did you perceive anything in my chocolate cup this morning?

Ser. Nothing, your worship, unless it was a little grounds.

Just. What colour were they?

Ser. Blackish, your worship.

Just. Ay, arsenic, black arsenic!—Why don't you run for Doctor Rosy, you rascal?

Ser. Now, sir?

Mrs. Bri. Oh, lovee, you may be sure it is in vain: let him run for the lawyer to witness your will, my life.

Just. Zounds! go for the doctor, you scoundrel. You are all confederate murderers.

Ser. Oh, here he is, your worship. [*Exit.*

Just. Now, Bridget, hold your tongue, and let me see if my horrid situation be apparent.

Enter DOCTOR ROSY.

Rosy. I have but just called to inform—hey! bless me, what's the matter with your worship?

Just. There, he sees it already!—Poison in my face, in capitals! Yes, yes, I'm a sure job for the undertakers indeed!

Mrs. Bri. Oh! oh! alas, doctor!

Just. Peace, Bridget!—Why, doctor, my dear old friend, do you really see any change in me?

Rosy. Change! never was man so altered: how came these black spots on your nose?

Just. Spots on my nose!

Rosy. And that wild stare in your right eye!

Just. In my right eye!

Rosy. Ay, and, alack, alack, how you are swelled!

Just. Swelled!

Rosy. Ay, don't you think he is, madam?

Mrs. Bri. Oh, 'tis in vain to conceal it!—Indeed, lovee, you are as big again as you were this morning.

Just. Yes, I feel it now—I'm poisoned!—Doctor, help me

for the love of justice! Give me life to see my murderer hanged.

Rosy. What?

Just. I'm poisoned, I say!

Rosy. Speak out!

Just. What! can't you hear me?

Rosy. Your voice is so low and hollow, as it were, I can't hear a word you say.

Just. I'm gone then!—*Hic jacet*, many years one of his majesty's justices!

Mrs. Bri. Read, doctor!—Ah, lovee, the will!—Consider, my life, how soon you will be dead.

Just. No, Bridget, I shall die by inches.

Rosy. I never heard such monstrous iniquity.—Oh, you are gone indeed, my friend! the mortgage of your little bit of clay 's out, and the sexton has nothing to do but to close. We must all go, sooner or later—high and low—Death's a debt; his mandamus binds all alike—no bail, no demurrer.

Just. Silence, Doctor Croaker! will you cure me or will you not?

Rosy. Alas! my dear friend, it is not in my power, but I'll certainly see justice done on your murderer.

Just. I thank you, my dear friend, but I had rather see it myself.

Rosy. Ay, but if you recover, the villain will escape.

Mrs. Bri. Will he? then indeed it would be a pity you should recover. I am so enraged against the villain, I can't bear the thought of his escaping the halter.

Just. That's very kind in you, my dear; but if it's the same thing to you, my dear, I had as soon recover, notwithstanding. —What, doctor, no assistance!

Rosy. Efacks, I can do nothing, but there's the German quack, whom you wanted to send from town; I met him at the next door, and I know he has antidotes for all poisons.

Just. Fetch him, my dear friend, fetch him! I'll get him a diploma if he cures me.

Rosy. Well, there's no time to be lost; you continue to swell immensely. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Bri. What, my dear, will you submit to be cured by a quack nostrum-monger? For my part, as much as I love you, I had rather follow you to your grave than see you owe your life to any but a regular-bred physician.

Just. I'm sensible of your affection, dearest; and be assured

nothing consoles me in my melancholy situation so much as the thoughts of leaving you behind.

Re-enter DOCTOR ROSY, *with* LIEUTENANT O'CONNOR *disguised.*

Rosy. Great luck; met him passing by the door.

O'Con. Metto dowsei pulsum.

Rosy. He desires me to feel your pulse.

Just. Can't he speak English?

Rosy. Not a word.

O'Con. Palio vivem mortem soonem.

Rosy. He says you have not six hours to live.

Just. O mercy! does he know my distemper?

Rosy. I believe not.

Just. Tell him 'tis black arsenic they have given me.

Rosy. Geneable illi arsnecca.

O'Con. Pisonatus.

Just. What does he say?

Rosy. He says you are poisoned.

Just. We know that; but what will be the effect?

Rosy. Quid effectum?

O'Con. Diable tutelluin.

Rosy. He says you'll die presently.

Just. Oh, horrible! What, no antidote?

O'Con. Curum benakere bono fullum.

Just. What, does he say I must row in a boat to Fulham?

Rosy. He says he'll undertake to cure you for three thousand pounds.

Mrs. Bri. Three thousand pounds! three thousand halters!—No, lovee, you shall never submit to such impositions; die at once, and be a customer to none of them.

Just. I won't die, Bridget—I don't like death.

Mrs. Bri. Psha! there is nothing in it: a moment, and it is over.

Just. Ay, but it leaves a numbness behind that lasts a plaguy long time.

Mrs. Bri. O my dear, pray consider the will.

Enter LAURETTA.

Lau. O my father, what is this I hear?

O'Con. Quiddam seomriam deos tollam rosam.

Rosy. The doctor is astonished at the sight of your fair daughter.

Just. How so?

O'Con. Damsellum livivum suvum rislibani.

Rosy. He says that he has lost his heart to her, and that if you will give him leave to pay his addresses to the young lady, and promise your consent to the union, if he should gain her affections, he will, on those conditions, cure you instantly, without fee or reward.

Just. The devil! did he say all that in so few words? What a fine language it is! Well, I agree, if he can prevail on the girl.—[*Aside.*] And that I am sure he never will.

Rosy. Greal.

O'Con. Writhum bothum.

Rosy. He says you must give this under your hand, while he writes you a miraculous receipt.

[*Both sit down to write.*

Lau. Do, mamma, tell me the meaning of this.

Mrs. Bri. Don't speak to me, girl.—Unnatural parent!

Just. There, doctor; there's what he requires.

Rosy. And here's your receipt: read it yourself.

Just. Hey! what's here? plain English!

Rosy. Read it out; a wondrous nostrum, I'll answer for it.

Just. [*Reads.*] *In reading this you are cured, by your affectionate son-in-law,* O'CONNOR.—Who, in the name of Beelzebub, sirrah, who are you?

O'Con. Your affectionate son-in-law, O'Connor, and your very humble servant, Humphrey Hum.

Just. 'Tis false, you dog! you are not my son-in-law; for I'll be poison'd again, and you shall be hanged.—I'll die, sirrah, and leave Bridget my estate.

Mrs. Bri. Ay, pray do, my dear, leave me your estate; I'm sure he deserves to be hanged.

Just. He does you say!—Hark'ee, Bridget, you showed such a tender concern for me when you thought me poisoned, that, for the future, I am resolved never to take your advice again in anything.—[*To* LIEUTENANT O'CONNOR.] So, do you hear, sir, you are an Irishman and a soldier, ain't you?

O'Con. I am, sir, and proud of both.

Just. The two things on earth I most hate; so I'll tell you what—renounce your country and sell your commission, and I'll forgive you.

O'Con. Hark'ee, Mr. Justice—if you were not the father of my Lauretta, I would pull your nose for asking the first, and break your bones for desiring the second.

Rosy. Ay, ay, you're right.

Just. Is he? then I'm sure I must be wrong.—Here, sir, I

give my daughter to you, who are the most impudent dog I ever saw in my life.

O'Con. Oh, sir, say what you please; with such a gift as Lauretta, every word is a compliment.

Mrs. Bri. Well, my lovee, I think this will be a good subject for us to quarrel about the rest of our lives.

Just. Why, truly, my dear, I think so, though we are seldom at a loss for that.

Rosy. This is all as it should be.—My Alexander, I give you joy, and you, my little god-daughter; and now my sincere wish is, that you may make just such a wife as my poor dear Dolly.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE DUENNA.

A COMIC OPERA.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AS ORIGINALLY ACTED AT COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE, NOV. 21, 1775.

DON FERDINAND . *Mr. Mattocks.*	LOPEZ . . . . *Mr. Wewitzer.*
DON JEROME . . *Mr. Wilson.*	
DON ANTONIO. . *Mr. Dubellamy.*	DONNA LOUISA . *Mrs. Mattocks.*
DON CARLOS . . *Mr. Leoni.*	DONNA CLARA . . *Mrs. Cargill.*
ISAAC MENDOZA . *Mr. Quick.*	THE DUENNA . . *Mrs. Green.*
FATHER PAUL . . *Mr. Mahon.*	
FATHER FRANCIS . *Mr. Fox.*	Masqueraders, Friars, Porter, Maid, and Servants.
FATHER AUGUSTINE *Mr. Baker.*	

SCENE.—SEVILLE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Street before* DON JEROME'S *House.*

Enter LOPEZ, *with a dark lantern.*

Lop. Past three o'clock!—So! a notable hour for one of my regular disposition, to be strolling like a bravo through the streets of Seville! Well, of all services, to serve a young lover is the hardest.—Not that I am an enemy to love; but my love and my master's differ strangely.—Don Ferdinand is much too gallant to eat, drink, or sleep:—now my love gives me an appetite—then I am fond of dreaming of my mistress, and I love dearly to toast her.—This cannot be done without good sleep and good liquor: hence my partiality to a feather-bed and a bottle. What a pity, now, that I have not further time for reflections! but my master expects thee, honest Lopez, to secure his retreat from Donna Clara's window, as I guess.—[*Music without.*] Hey! sure, I heard music! So, so! Who have we here? Oh, Don Antonio, my master's friend, come from the masquerade, to serenade my young mistress, Donna Louisa, I suppose: so! we shall have the old gentleman up presently.—Lest he should miss his son, I had best lose no time in getting to my post. [*Exit.*

Enter DON ANTONIO, *with* MASQUERADERS *and music.*

SONG.—*Don Ant.*

Tell me, my lute, can thy soft strain
So gently speak thy master's pain?
So softly sing, so humbly sigh,
That, though my sleeping love shall know
Who sings—who sighs below,
Her rosy slumbers shall not fly?
Thus, may some vision whisper more
Than ever I dare speak before.

1 *Mas.* Antonio, your mistress will never wake, while you sing so dolefully; love, like a cradled infant, is lulled by a sad melody.

Don Ant. I do not wish to disturb her rest.

1 *Mas.* The reason is, because you know she does not regard you enough to appear, if you awaked her.

Don Ant. Nay, then, I'll convince you. [*Sings.*

The breath of morn bids hence the night,
Unveil those beauteous eyes, my fair;
For till the dawn of love is there,
I feel no day, I own no light.

DONNA LOUISA—*replies from a window.*

Waking, I heard thy numbers chide,
Waking, the dawn did bless my sight;
'Tis Phœbus sure that woos, I cried,
Who speaks in song, who moves in light.

DON JEROME—*from a window.*

What vagabonds are these, I hear,
Fiddling, fluting, rhyming, ranting,
Piping, scraping, whining, canting,
Fly, scurvy minstrels, fly!

TRIO.

Don. Louisa. Nay, prithee, father, why so rough?
Don Ant. . . An humble lover I.
Don Jer. . . How durst you, daughter, lend an ear
To such deceitful stuff?
Quick, from the window fly!
Don. Louisa. Adieu, Antonio!
Don Ant. . . Must you go?
Don. Louisa } We soon, perhaps, may meet again.
Don Ant. . } For though hard fortune is our foe,
The god of love will fight for us.
Don Jer. . . Reach me the blunderbuss.
Don Ant. . }
Don. Louisa } The god of love, who knows our pain—
Don Jer. . . Hence, or these slugs are through your brain.
[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.—*A Piazza.*

Enter DON FERDINAND *and* LOPEZ.

Lop. Truly, sir, I think that a little sleep once in a week or so——

Don Ferd. Peace, fool! don't mention sleep to me.

Lop. No, no, sir, I don't mention your lowbred, vulgar, sound sleep; but I can't help thinking that a gentle slumber, or half an hour's dozing, if it were only for the novelty of the thing——

Don Ferd. Peace, booby, I say!—Oh Clara, dear, cruel disturber of my rest!

Lop. And of mine too. [*Aside.*

Don Ferd. 'Sdeath, to trifle with me at such a juncture as this!—now to stand on punctilios!—Love me! I don't believe she ever did.

Lop. Nor I either. [*Aside.*

Don Ferd. Or is it, that her sex never know their desires for an hour together?

Lop. Ah, they know them oftener than they'll own them. [*Aside.*

Don Ferd. Is there, in the world, so inconsistent a creature as Clara?

Lop. I could name one. [*Aside.*

Don Ferd. Yes; the tame fool who submits to her caprice.

Lop. I thought he couldn't miss it. [*Aside.*

Don Ferd. Is she not capricious, teasing, tyrannical, obstinate, perverse, absurd? ay, a wilderness of faults and follies; her looks are scorn, and her very smiles—'Sdeath! I wish I hadn't mentioned her smiles; for she does smile such beaming loveliness, such fascinating brightness—Oh, death and madness! I shall die if I lose her.

Lop. Oh, those damned smiles have undone all! [*Aside.*

AIR.—*Don Ferd.*

Could I her faults remember,
Forgetting every charm,
Soon would impartial reason
The tyrant love disarm:
But when enraged I number
Each failing of her mind,
Love still suggests each beauty,
And sees—while reason's blind.

Lop. Here comes Don Antonio, sir.

Don Ferd. Well, go you home—I shall be there presently.

Lop. Ah, those cursed smiles! [*Exit.*

Enter DON ANTONIO.

Don Ferd. Antonio, Lopez tells me he left you chanting before our door—was my father waked?

Don Ant. Yes, yes; he has a singular affection for music, so I left him roaring at his barred window, like the print of Bajazet in the cage. And what brings you out so early?

Don Ferd. I believe I told you, that to-morrow was the day fixed by Don Pedro and Clara's unnatural stepmother, for her to enter a convent, in order that her brat might possess her fortune: made desperate by this, I procured a key to the door, and bribed Clara's maid to leave it unbolted; at two this morning, I entered, unperceived, and stole to her chamber—I found her waking and weeping.

Don Ant. Happy Ferdinand!

Don Ferd. 'Sdeath! hear the conclusion.—I was rated as the most confident ruffian, for daring to approach her room at that hour of night.

Don Ant. Ay, ay, this was at first.

Don Ferd. No such thing! she would not hear a word from me, but threatened to raise her mother, if I did not instantly leave her.

Don Ant. Well, but at last?

Don Ferd. At last! why I was forced to leave the house as I came in.

Don Ant. And did you do nothing to offend her?

Don Ferd. Nothing, as I hope to be saved!—I believe, I might snatch a dozen or two of kisses.

Don Ant. Was that all? well, I think, I never heard of such assurance!

Don Ferd. Zounds! I tell you I behaved with the utmost respect.

Don Ant. O Lord! I don't mean you, but in her. But, hark ye, Ferdinand, did you leave your key with them?

Don Ferd. Yes; the maid, who saw me out, took it from the door.

Don Ant. Then, my life for it, her mistress elopes after you.

Don Ferd. Ay, to bless my rival, perhaps. I am in a humour to suspect everybody.—You loved her once, and thought her an angel, as I do now.

Don Ant. Yes, I loved her, till I found she wouldn't love me, and then I discovered that she hadn't a good feature in her face.

AIR.

I ne'er could any lustre see
In eyes that would not look on me;
I ne'er saw nectar on a lip,
But where my own did hope to sip.
Has the maid who seeks my heart
Cheeks of rose, untouch'd by art?
I will own the colour true,
When yielding blushes aid their hue.
Is her hand so soft and pure?
I must press it, to be sure;
Nor can I be certain then,
Till it, grateful, press again.
Must I, with attentive eye,
Watch her heaving bosom sigh?
I will do so, when I see
That heaving bosom sigh for me.

Besides, Ferdinand, you have full security in my love for your sister; help me there, and I can never disturb you with Clara.

Don Ferd. As far as I can, consistently with the honour of our family, you know I will; but there must be no eloping.

Don Ant. And yet, now, you would carry off Clara?

Don Ferd. Ay, that's a different case!—we never mean that others should act to our sisters and wives as we do to others'.—But, to-morrow, Clara is to be forced into a convent.

Don Ant. Well, and am not I so unfortunately circumstanced? To-morrow, your father forces Louisa to marry Isaac, the Portuguese—but come with me, and we'll devise something I warrant.

Don Ferd. I must go home.

Don Ant. Well, adieu!

Don Ferd. But, Antonio, if you did not love my sister, you have too much honour and friendship to supplant me with Clara?——

AIR.—*Don Ant.*

Friendship is the bond of reason;
But if beauty disapprove,
Heaven dissolves all other treason
In the heart that's true to love.
The faith which to my friend I swore,
As a civil oath I view;
But to the charms which I adore,
'Tis religion to be true.

[*Exit.*

Don Ferd. There is always a levity in Antonio's manner of replying to me on this subject that is very alarming.—'Sdeath! if Clara should love him after all!

SONG.

Though cause for suspicion appears,
Yet proofs of her love, too, are strong;
I'm a wretch if I'm right in my fears,
And unworthy of bliss if I'm wrong.
What heart-breaking torments from jealousy flow,
Ah! none but the jealous—the jealous can know!

When blest with the smiles of my fair,
I know not how much I adore:
Those smiles let another but share,
And I wonder I prized them no more!
Then whence can I hope a relief from my woe,
When the falser she seems, still the fonder I grow!

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*A Room in* DON JEROME'S *House.*

Enter DONNA LOUISA *and* DUENNA.

Don. Louisa. But, my dear Margaret, my charming Duenna, do you think we shall succeed?

Duen. I tell you again, I have no doubt on't; but it must be instantly put to the trial. Everything is prepared in your room, and for the rest we must trust to fortune.

Don. Louisa. My father's oath was, never to see me till I had consented to——

Duen. 'Twas thus I overheard him say to his friend, Don Guzman,—*I will demand of her to-morrow, once for all, whether she will consent to marry Isaac Mendoza; if she hesitates, I will make a solemn oath never to see or speak to her till she returns to her duty.*—These were his words.

Don. Louisa. And on his known obstinate adherence to what he has once said, you have formed this plan for my escape. ——But have you secured my maid in our interest?

Duen. She is a party in the whole; but remember, if we succeed, you resign all right and title in little Isaac, the ew, over to me.

Don. Louisa. That I do with all my soul; get him if you can, and I shall wish you joy most heartily. He is twenty times as rich as my poor Antonio.

AIR.

Thou canst not boast of fortune's store,
My love, while me they wealthy call:
But I was glad to find thee poor—
For with my heart I'd give thee all.
And then the grateful youth shall own
I loved him for himself alone.

But when his worth my hand shall gain,
No word or look of mine shall show
That I the smallest thought retain
Of what my bounty did bestow:
Yet still his grateful heart shall own
I loved him for himself alone.

Duen. I hear Don Jerome coming.—Quick, give me the last letter I brought you from Antonio—you know that is to be the ground of my dismission—I must slip out to seal it up, as undelivered. [*Exit.*

Enter DON JEROME *and* DON FERDINAND.

Don Jer. What, I suppose you have been serenading too! Eh, disturbing some peaceable neighbourhood with villanous catgut and lascivious piping! Out on't! you set your sister, here, a vile example; but I come to tell you, madam, that I'll suffer no more of these midnight incantations—these amorous orgies, that steal the senses in the hearing; as, they say, Egyptian embalmers serve mummies, extracting the brain through the ears. However, there's an end of your frolics—Isaac Mendoza will be here presently, and to-morrow you shall marry him.

Don. Louisa. Never, while I have life!

Don Ferd. Indeed, sir, I wonder how you can think of such a man for a son-in-law.

Don Jer. Sir, you are very kind to favour me with your sentiments—and pray, what is your objection to him?

Don Ferd. He is a Portuguese, in the first place.

Don Jer. No such thing, boy; he has forsworn his country.

Don. Louisa. He is a Jew.

Don Jer. Another mistake: he has been a Christian these six weeks.

Don Ferd. Ay, he left his old religion for an estate, and has not had time to get a new one.

Don. Louisa. But stands like a dead wall between church and synagogue, or like the blank leaves between the Old and New Testament.

Don Jer. Anything more?

Don Ferd. But the most remarkable part of his character is his passion for deceit and tricks of cunning.

Don. Louisa. Though at the same time the fool predominates so much over the knave, that I am told he is generally the dupe of his own art.

Don Ferd. True; like an unskilful gunner, he usually misses his aim, and is hurt by the recoil of his own piece.

Don Jer. Anything more?

Don. Louisa. To sum up all, he has the worst fault a husband can have—he's not my choice.

Don Jer. But you are his; and choice on one side is sufficient—two lovers should never meet in marriage—be you sour as you please, he is sweet-tempered; and for your good fruit, there's nothing like ingrafting on a crab.

Don. Louisa. I detest him as a lover, and shall ten times more as a husband.

Don Jer. I don't know that—marriage generally makes a great change—but, to cut the matter short, will you have him or not?

Don. Louisa. There is nothing else I could disobey you in.

Don Jer. Do you value your father's peace?

Don. Louisa. So much, that I will not fasten on him the regret of making an only daughter wretched.

Don Jer. Very well, ma'am, then mark me—never more will I see or converse with you till you return to your duty—no reply—this and your chamber shall be your apartments; I never will stir out without leaving you under lock and key, and when I'm at home no creature can approach you but through my library: we'll try who can be most obstinate. Out of my sight!—there remain till you know your duty. [*Pushes her out.*

Don Ferd. Surely, sir, my sister's inclinations should be consulted in a matter of this kind, and some regard paid to Don Antonio, being my particular friend.

Don Jer. That, doubtless, is a very great recommendation!—I certainly have not paid sufficient respect to it.

Don Ferd. There is not a man living I would sooner choose for a brother-in-law.

Don Jer. Very possible; and if you happen to have e'er a sister, who is not at the same time a daughter of mine, I'm sure I shall have no objection to the relationship; but at present, if you please, we'll drop the subject.

Don Ferd. Nay, sir, 'tis only my regard for my sister makes me speak.

Don Jer. Then, pray, sir, in future, let your regard for your father make you hold your tongue.

Don Ferd. I have done, sir. I shall only add a wish that you would reflect what at our age you would have felt, had you been crossed in your affection for the mother of her you are so severe to.

Don Jer. Why, I must confess I had a great affection for your mother's ducats, but that was all boy. I married her for

her fortune, and she took me in obedience to her father, and a very happy couple we were. We never expected any love from one another, and so we were never disappointed. If we grumbled a little now and then, it was soon over, for we were never fond enough to quarrel; and when the good woman died, why, why,—I had as lieve she had lived, and I wish every widower in Seville could say the same. I shall now go and get the key of this dressing-room—so, good son, if you have any lecture in support of disobedience to give your sister, it must be brief; so make the best of your time, d'ye hear?

[*Exit.*

Don Ferd. I fear, indeed, my friend Antonio has little to hope for; however, Louisa has firmness, and my father's anger will probably only increase her affection.—In our intercourse with the world, it is natural for us to dislike those who are innocently the cause of our distress; but in the heart's attachment a woman never likes a man with ardour till she has suffered for his sake—[*Noise.*] So! What bustle is here! between my father and the Duenna too—I'll e'en get out of the way.

[*Exit.*

Re-enter DON JEROME *with a letter, pulling in* DUENNA.

Don Jer. I'm astonished! I'm thunder-struck! here's treachery and conspiracy with a vengeance! You, Antonio's creature, and chief manager of this plot for my daughter's eloping!—you, that I placed here as a scarecrow?

Duen. What?

Don Jer. A scarecrow—to prove a decoy-duck! What have you to say for yourself?

Duen. Well, sir, since you have forced that letter from me, and discovered my real sentiments, I scorn to renounce them.—I am Antonio's friend, and it was my intention that your daughter should have served you as all such old tyrannical sots should be served—I delight in the tender passions, and would befriend all under their influence.

Don Jer. The tender passions! yes, they would become those impenetrable features! Why, thou deceitful hag! I placed thee as a guard to the rich blossoms of my daughter's beauty. I thought that dragon's front of thine would cry aloof to the sons of gallantry: steel traps and spring guns seemed writ in every wrinkle of it.—But you shall quit my house this instant. The tender passions, indeed! go, thou wanton sibyl, thou amorous woman of Endor, go!

Duen. You base, scurrilous, old—but I won't demean myself by naming what you are.—Yes, savage, I'll leave your den; but

I suppose you don't mean to detain my apparel—I may have my things, I presume?

Don Jer. I took you, mistress, with your wardrobe on—what have you pilfered, eh?

Duen. Sir, I must take leave of my mistress; she has valuables of mine: besides, my cardinal and veil are in her room.

Don Jer. Your veil, forsooth! what, do you dread being gazed at? or are you afraid of your complexion? Well, go take your leave, and get your veil and cardinal! so! you quit the house within these five minutes.—In—in—quick!—[*Exit* DUENNA.] Here was a precious plot of mischief!—these are the comforts daughters bring us!

AIR.

If a daughter you have, she's the plague of your life,
No peace shall you know, though you've buried your wife!
At twenty she mocks at the duty you taught her—
Oh, what a plague is an obstinate daughter!
Sighing and whining,
Dying and pining,
Oh, what a plague is an obstinate daughter!

When scarce in their teens they have wit to perplex us,
With letters and lovers for ever they vex us;
While each still rejects the fair suitor you've brought her;
Oh, what a plague is an obstinate daughter!
Wrangling and jangling,
Flouting and pouting,
Oh, what a plague is an obstinate daughter!

Re-enter DONNA LOUISA, *dressed as* DUENNA, *with cardinal and veil, seeming to cry.*

This way, mistress, this way.—What, I warrant, a tender parting; so! tears of turpentine down those deal cheeks.—Ay, you may well hide your head—yes, whine till your heart breaks! but I'll not hear one word of excuse—so you are right to be dumb. This way, this way. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter DUENNA.

Duen. So, speed you well, sagacious Don Jerome! Oh rare effects of passion and obstinacy! Now shall I try whether I can't play the fine lady as well as my mistress, and if I succeed, I may be a fine lady for the rest of my life—I'll lose no time to equip myself. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*The Court before* DON JEROME'S *House.*

Enter DON JEROME *and* DONNA LOUISA.

Don Jer. Come, mistress, there is your way—the world lies before you, so troop, thou antiquated Eve, thou original sin! Hold, yonder is some fellow skulking; perhaps it is Antonio—go to him, d'ye hear, and tell him to make you amends, and

as he has got you turned away, tell him I say it is but just he should take you himself; go—[*Exit* DONNA LOUISA.] So! I am rid of her, thank heaven! and now I shall be able to keep my oath, and confine my daughter with better security. [*Exit.*

SCENE V.—*The Piazza.*

Enter DONNA CLARA *and* MAID.

Maid. But where, madam, is it you intend to go?

Don. Clara. Anywhere to avoid the selfish violence of my mother-in-law, and Ferdinand's insolent importunity.

Maid. Inded, ma'am, since we have profited by Don Ferdinand's key, in making our escape, I think we had best find him, if it were only to thank him.

Don. Clara. No—he has offended me exceedingly. [*Retires.*

Enter DONNA LOUISA.

Don. Louisa. So I have succeeded in being turned out of doors—but how shall I find Antonio? I dare not inquire for him, for fear of being discovered; I would send to my friend Clara, but that I doubt her prudery would condemn me.

Maid. Then suppose, ma'am, you were to try if your friend Donna Louisa would not receive you?

Don. Clara. No, her notions of filial duty are so severe, she would certainly betray me.

Don. Louisa. Clara is of a cold temper, and would think this step of mine highly forward.

Don. Clara. Louisa's respect for her father is so great, she would not credit the unkindness of mine.

[DONNA LOUISA *turns, and sees* DONNA CLARA *and* MAID.

Don. Louisa. Ha! who are those? sure one is Clara—if it be, I'll trust her. Clara! [*Advances.*

Don. Clara. Louisa! and in masquerade too!

Don. Louisa. You will be more surprised when I tell you, that I have run away from my father.

Don. Clara. Surprised indeed! and I should certainly chide you most horridly, only that I have just run away from mine.

Don. Louisa. My dear Clara! [*Embrace.*

Don. Clara. Dear sister truant! and whither are you going?

Don. Louisa. To find the man I love, to be sure: and, I presume, you would have no aversion to meet with my brother?

Don. Clara. Indeed I should: he has behaved so ill to me, I don't believe I shall ever forgive him.

AIR.

When sable night, each drooping plant restoring,
Wept o'er the flowers her breath did cheer,
As some sad widow o'er her babe deploring,
Wakes its beauty with a tear:

When all did sleep whose weary hearts did borrow
One hour from love and care to rest,
Lo! as I press'd my couch in silent sorrow,
My lover caught me to his breast!
He vow'd he came to save me
From those who would enslave me?
Then kneeling,
Kisses stealing,
Endless faith he swore;
But soon I chid him thence,
For had his fond pretence
Obtain'd one favour then,
And he had press'd again,
I fear'd my treacherous heart might grant him more.

Don. Louisa. Well, for all this, I would have sent him to plead his pardon, but that I would not yet awhile have him know of my flight. And where do you hope to find protection?

Don. Clara. The Lady Abbess of the convent of St. Catharine is a relation and kind friend of mine—I shall be secure with her, and you had best go thither with me.

Don. Louisa. No; I am determined to find Antonio first; and, as I live, here comes the very man I will employ to seek him for me.

Don. Clara. Who is he? he's a strange figure.

Don. Louisa. Yes; that sweet creature is the man whom my father has fixed on for my husband.

Don. Clara. And will you speak to him? are you mad?

Don. Louisa. He is the fittest man in the world for my purpose; for, though I was to have married him to-morrow, he is the only man in Seville, who, I am sure, never saw me in his life.

Don. Clara. And how do you know him?

Don. Louisa. He arrived but yesterday, and he was shown to me from the window, as he visited my father.

Don. Clara. Well, I'll begone.

Don. Louisa. Hold, my dear Clara—a thought has struck me: will you give me leave to borrow your name, as I see occasion?

Don. Clara. It will but disgrace you; but use it as you please: I dare not stay.—[*Going.*]—But, Louisa, if you should see your brother, be sure you don't inform him that I have taken refuge with the Dame Prior of the convent of St. Catharine, on the left hand side of the piazza, which leads to the church of St. Anthony.

Don. Louisa. Ha! ha! ha! I'll be very particular in my directions where he may not find you.—[*Exeunt* DONNA CLARA *and* MAID.]—So! my swain, yonder, has done admiring himself, and draws nearer. [*Retires.*

Enter ISAAC *and* DON CARLOS.

Isaac. [*Looking in a pocket-glass.*] I tell you, friend Carlos, I will please myself in the habit of my chin.

Don. Car. But, my dear friend, how can you think to please a lady with such a face?

Isaac. Why, what's the matter with the face! I think it is a very engaging face; and, I am sure, a lady must have very little taste who could dislike my beard.—[*Sees* DONNA LOUISA.] —See now! I'll die if here is not a little damsel struck with it already.

Don. Louisa. Signor, are you disposed to oblige a lady who greatly wants your assistance. [*Unveils.*

Isaac. Egad, a very pretty black-eyed girl! she has certainly taken a fancy to me, Carlos. First, ma'am, I must beg the favour of your name.

Don. Louisa. [*Aside.*] So! it's well I am provided.—[*Aloud.*] —My name, sir, is Donna Clara d'Almanza.

Isaac. What? Don Guzman's daughter? I'faith, I just now heard she was missing.

Don. Louisa. But sure, sir, you have too much gallantry and honour to betray me, whose fault is love?

Isaac. So! a passion for me! poor girl! Why, ma'am, as for betraying you, I don't see how I could get anything by it; so, you may rely on my honour; but as for your love, I am sorry your case is so desperate.

Don. Louisa. Why so, signor?

Isaac. Because I am positively engaged to another—an't I, Carlos?

Don. Louisa. Nay, but hear me.

Isaac. No, no; what should I hear for? It is impossible for me to court you in an honourable way; and for any thing else, if I were to comply now, I suppose you have some ungrateful brother, or cousin, who would want to cut my throat for my civility—so, truly, you had best go home again.

Don. Louisa. [*Aside.*] Odious wretch!—[*Aloud.*]—But, good signor, it is Antonio d'Ercilla, on whose account I have eloped.

Isaac. How! what! it is not with me, then, that you are in love?

Don. Louisa. No, indeed, it is not.

Isaac. Then you are a forward, impertinent simpleton! and I shall certainly acquaint your father.

Don. Louisa. Is this your gallantry?

Isaac. Yet hold—Antonio d'Ercilla, did you say? egad, I may make something of this—Antonio d'Ercilla?

Don. Louisa. Yes; and, if ever you wish to prosper in love, you will bring me to him.

Isaac. By St. Iago and I will too!—Carlos, this Antonio is one who rivals me (as I have heard) with Louisa—now, if I could hamper him with this girl, I should have the field to myself; hey, Carlos! A lucky thought, isn't it?

Don. Car. Yes, very good—very good!

Isaac. Ah! this little brain is never at a loss—cunning Isaac! cunning rogue! Donna Clara, will you trust yourself awhile to my friend's direction?

Don. Louisa. May I rely on you, good signor?

Don. Car. Lady, it is impossible I should deceive you.

AIR.

Had I a heart for falsehood framed,
I ne'er could injure you;
For though your tongue no promise claim'd,
Your charms would make me true.
To you no soul shall bear deceit,
No stranger offer wrong;
But friends in all the aged you'll meet,
And lovers in the young.

But when they learn that you have blest
Another with your heart,
They'll bid aspiring passion rest,
And act a brother's part:
Then, lady, dread not here deceit,
Nor fear to suffer wrong;
For friends in all the aged you'll meet,
And brothers in the young.

Isaac. Conduct the lady to my lodgings, Carlos; I must haste to Don Jerome. Perhaps you know Louisa, ma'am. She's divinely handsome, isn't she?

Don. Louisa. You must excuse me not joining with you.

Isaac. Why, I have heard it on all hands.

Don. Louisa. Her father is uncommonly partial to her; but I believe you will find she has rather a matronly air.

Isaac. Carlos, this is all envy.—You pretty girls never speak well of one another.—[*To* DON CARLOS.] Hark ye, find out Antonio, and I'll saddle him with this scrape, I warrant. Oh, 'twas the luckiest thought! Donna Clara, your very obedient. Carlos to your post.

DUET.

Isaac. . . My mistress expects me, and I must go to her,
Or how can I hope for a smile?
Don. Louisa. Soon may you return a prosperous wooer,
But think what I suffer the while!
Alone, and away from the man whom I love,
In strangers I'm forced to confide.

Isaac. . . Dear lady, my friend you may trust, and he'll prove
Your servant, protector, and guide.

AIR.

Don Car. . Gentle maid, ah! why suspect me?
Let me serve thee—then reject me.
Canst thou trust, and I deceive thee?
Art thou sad, and shall I grieve thee?
Gentle maid, ah! why suspect me?
Let me serve thee—then reject me.

TRIO.

Don. Louisa. . Never mayst thou happy be,
If in aught thou'rt false to me.
Isaac. . . . Never may he happy be,
If in aught he's false to thee.
Don Car. . . Never may I happy be,
If in aught I'm false to thee.
Don. Louisa. . Never mayst thou, &c.
Isaac. . . . Never may he, &c.
Don Car. . . Never may I, &c. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Library in* DON JEROME'S *House.*

Enter DON JEROME *and* ISAAC.

Don Jer. Ha! ha! ha! run away from her father! has she given him the slip? Ha! ha! ha! poor Don Guzman!

Isaac. Ay; and I am to conduct her to Antonio; by which means you see I shall hamper him so that he can give me no disturbance with your daughter—this is a trap, isn't it? a nice stroke of cunning, hey?

Don Jer. Excellent! excellent! yes, yes, carry her to him, hamper him by all means, ha! ha! ha! poor Don Guzman! an old fool! imposed on by a girl!

Isaac. Nay, they have the cunning of serpents, that's the truth on't.

Don Jer. Psha! they are cunning only when they have fools to deal with. Why don't my girl play me such a trick—let her cunning over-reach my caution, I say—hey, little Isaac!

Isaac. True, true; or let me see any of the sex make a fool of me!—No, no, egad! little Solomon (as my aunt used to call me) understands tricking a little too well.

Don Jer. Ay, but such a driveller as Don Guzman!

Isaac. And such a dupe as Antonio!

Don Jer. True; never were seen such a couple of credulous simpletons! But come, 'tis time you should see my daughter—you must carry on the siege by yourself, friend Isaac.

Isaac. Sir, you'll introduce

Don Jer. No—I have sworn a solemn oath not to see or speak to her till she renounces her disobedience; win her to that, and she gains a father and a husband at once.

Isaac. Gad, I shall never be able to deal with her alone; nothing keeps me in such awe as perfect beauty—now there is something consoling and encouraging in ugliness.

SONG.

Give Isaac the nymph who no beauty can boast,
But health and good humour to make her his toast;
If straight, I don't mind whether slender or fat,
And six feet or four—we'll ne'er quarrel for that.

Whate'er her complexion, I vow I don't care;
If brown, it is lasting—more pleasing, if fair:
And though in her face I no dimples should see,
Let her smile—and each dell is a dimple to me.

Let her locks be the reddest that ever were seen,
And her eyes may be e'en any colour but green;
For in eyes, though so various the lustre and hue,
I swear I've no choice—only let her have two.

'Tis true I'd dispense with a throne on her back,
And white teeth, I own, are genteeler than black;
A little round chin too's a beauty, I've heard;
But I only desire she mayn't have a beard.

Don Jer. You will change your note, my friend, when you've seen Louisa.

Isaac. Oh, Don Jerome, the honour of your alliance——

Don Jer. Ay, but her beauty will affect you—she is, though I say it, who am her father, a very prodigy. There you will see features with an eye like mine—yes, i'faith, there is a kind of wicked sparkling—something of a roguish brightness, that shows her to be my own.

Isaac. Pretty rogue!

Don Jer. Then, when she smiles, you'll see a little dimple in one cheek only; a beauty it is certainly, yet you shall not say which is prettiest, the cheek with the dimple, or the cheek without.

Isaac. Pretty rogue!

Don Jer. Then the roses on those cheeks are shaded with a sort of velvet down, that gives a delicacy to the glow of health.

Isaac. Pretty rogue!

Don Jer. Her skin pure dimity, yet more fair, being spangled here and there with a golden freckle.

Isaac. Charming pretty rogue! pray how is the tone of her voice?

Don Jer. Remarkably pleasing—but if you could prevail on

her to sing, you would be enchanted—she is a nightingale—a Virginia nightingale! But come, come; her maid shall conduct you to her antechamber.

Isaac. Well, egad, I'll pluck up resolution, and meet her frowns intrepidly.

Don Jer. Ay! woo her briskly—win her, and give me a proof of your address, my little Solomon.

Isaac. But hold—I expect my friend Carlos to call on me here. If he comes, will you send him to me?

Don Jer. I will. Lauretta!—[*Calls.*]—Come—she'll show you to the room. What! do you droop? here's a mournful face to make love with! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—DONNA LOUISA'S *Dressing-Room.*

Enter ISAAC *and* MAID.

Maid. Sir, my mistress will wait on you presently. [*Goes to the door.*

Isaac. When she's at leisure—don't hurry her.—[*Exit* MAID.]—I wish I had ever practised a love-scene—I doubt I shall make a poor figure—I couldn't be more afraid if I was going before the Inquisition. So, the door opens—yes, she's coming—the very rustling of her silk has a disdainful sound.

Enter DUENNA, *dressed as* DONNA LOUISA.

Now dar'n't I look round for the soul of me—her beauty will certainly strike me dumb if I do. I wish she'd speak first.

Duen. Sir, I attend your pleasure.

Isaac. [*Aside.*] So! the ice is broke, and a pretty civil beginning too!—[*Aloud.*] Hem! madam—miss—I'm all attention.

Duen. Nay, sir, 'tis I who should listen, and you propose.

Isaac. [*Aside.*] Egad, this isn't so disdainful neither—I believe I may venture to look. No—I dar'n't—one glance of those roguish sparklers would fix me again.

Duen. You seem thoughtful, sir. Let me persuade you to sit down.

Isaac. [*Aside*]. So, so; she mollifies apace—she's struck with my figure! this attitude has had its effect.

Duen. Come, sir, here's a chair.

Isaac. Madam, the greatness of your goodness overpowers me—that a lady so lovely should deign to turn her beauteous eyes on me so. [*She takes his hand, he turns and sees her.*

Duen. You seem surprised at my condescension.

Isaac. Why, yes, madam, I am a little surprised at it.—[*Aside.*] Zounds! this can never be Louisa—she's as old as my mother!

Duen. But former prepossessions give way to my father's commands.

Isaac. [*Aside.*] Her father! Yes, 'tis she then.—Lord, Lord; how blind some parents are!

Duen. Signor Isaac!

Isaac. [*Aside.*] Truly, the little damsel was right—she has rather a matronly air, indeed! ah! 'tis well my affections are fixed on her fortune, and not her person.

Duen. Signor, won't you sit? [*She sits.*

Isaac. Pardon me, madam, I have scarce recovered my astonishment at—your condescension, madam.—[*Aside.*] She has the devil's own dimples, to be sure!

Duen. I do not wonder, sir, that you are surprised at my affability—I own, signor, that I was vastly prepossessed against you, and, being teased by my father, I did give some encouragement to Antonio; but then, sir, you were described to me as quite a different person.

Isaac. Ay, and so you were to me, upon my soul, madam.

Duen. But when I saw you I was never more struck in my life.

Isaac. That was just my case too, madam: I was struck all on a heap, for my part.

Duen. Well, sir, I see our misapprehension has been mutual—you expected to find me haughty and averse, and I was taught to believe you a little black, snub-nosed fellow, without person, manners, or address.

Isaac. Egad, I wish she had answered her picture as well! [*Aside.*

Duen. But, sir, your air is noble—something so liberal in your carriage, with so penetrating an eye, and so bewitching a smile!

Isaac. Egad, now I look at her again, I don't think she is so ugly! [*Aside.*

Duen. So little like a Jew, and so much like a gentleman!

Isaac. Well, certainly, there is something pleasing in the tone of her voice. [*Aside.*

Duen. You will pardon this breach of decorum in praising you thus, but my joy at being so agreeably deceived has given me such a flow of spirits!

Isaac. Oh, dear lady, may I thank those dear lips for this goodness?—[*Kisses her.*] Why she has a pretty sort of velvet down, that's the truth on't. [*Aside.*

Duen. O sir, you have the most insinuating manner, but in-

deed you should get rid of that odious beard—one might as well kiss a hedgehog.

Isaac. [*Aside.*] Yes, ma'am, the razor wouldn't be amiss—for either of us.—[*Aloud.*] Could you favour me with a song?

Duen. Willingly, sir, though I am rather hoarse—ahem! [*Begins to sing.*

Isaac. [*Aside.*] Very like a Virginia nightingale!—[*Aloud.*] Ma'am, I perceive you're hoarse—I beg you will not distress——

Duen. Oh, not in the least distressed. Now, sir.

SONG.

When a tender maid
Is first assay'd
By some admiring swain,
How her blushes rise
If she meet his eyes,
While he unfolds his pain!
If he takes her hand, she trembles quite!
Touch her lips, and she swoons outright!
While a pit-a-pat, &c.
Her heart avows her fright.

But in time appear
Fewer signs of fear;
The youth she boldly views:
If her hand he grasp,
Or her bosom clasp,
No mantling blush ensues!
Then to church well pleased the lovers move,
While her smiles her contentment prove;
And a pit-a-pat, &c.
Her heart avows her love.

Isaac. Charming, ma'am! enchanting! and, truly, your notes put me in mind of one that's very dear to me—a lady, indeed, whom you greatly resemble!

Duen. How! is there, then, another so dear to you?

Isaac. Oh, no, ma'am, you mistake; it was my mother I meant.

Duen. Come, sir, I see you are amazed and confounded at my condescension, and know not what to say.

Isaac. It is very true, indeed, ma'am; but it is a judgment, I look on it as a judgment on me, for delaying to urge the time when you'll permit me to complete my happiness, by acquainting Don Jerome with your condescension.

Duen. Sir, I must frankly own to you, that I can never be yours with my father's consent.

Isaac. Good lack! how so?

Duen. When my father, in his passion, swore he would never see me again till I acquiesced in his will, I also made a vow, that I would never take a husband from his hand; nothing shall make me break that oath: but, if you have spirit and contrivance enough to carry me off without his knowledge, I'm yours.

Isaac. Hum!

Duen. Nay, sir, if you hesitate——

Isaac. [*Aside.*] I'faith, no bad whim this!—If I take her at her word, I shall secure her fortune, and avoid making any settlement in return; thus I shall not only cheat the lover, but the father too. Oh, cunning rogue, Isaac! ay, ay, let this little brain alone! Egad, I'll take her in the mind!

Duen. Well, sir, what's your determination?

Isaac. Madam, I was dumb only from rapture—I applaud your spirit, and joyfully close with your proposal; for which thus let me, on this lily hand, express my gratitude.

Duen. Well, sir, you must get my father's consent to walk with me in the garden. But by no means inform him of my kindness to you.

Isaac. No, to be sure, that would spoil all: but, trust me when tricking is the word—let me alone for a piece of cunning; this very day you shall be out of his power.

Duen. Well, I leave the management of it all to you; I perceive plainly, sir, that you are not one that can be easily outwitted.

Isaac. Egad, you're right, madam—you're right, i'faith.

Re-enter MAID.

Maid. Here's a gentleman at the door, who begs permission to speak with Signor Isaac.

Isaac. A friend of mine, ma'am, and a trusty friend—let him come in—[*Exit* MAID.] He is one to be depended on, ma'am.

Enter DON CARLOS.

So, coz. [*Talks apart with* DON CARLOS.

Don Car. I have left Donna Clara at your lodgings, but can nowhere find Antonio.

Isaac. Well, I will search him out myself. Carlos, you rogue, I thrive, I prosper!

Don Car. Where is your mistress?

Isaac. There, you booby, there she stands.

Don Car. Why, she's damned ugly!

Isaac. Hush! [*Stops his mouth.*

Duen. What is your friend saying, signor?

Isaac. Oh, ma'am, he is expressing his raptures at such charms as he never saw before. Eh, Carlos?

Don Car. Ay, such as I never saw before, indeed!

Duen. You are a very obliging gentleman. Well, Signor Isaac, I believe we had better part for the present. Remember our plan.

Isaac. Oh, ma'am, it is written in my heart, fixed as the image of those divine beauties. Adieu, idol of my soul!—yet once more permit me—— [*Kisses her.*

Duen. Sweet, courteous sir, adieu!

Isaac. Your slave eternally! Come, Carlos, say something civil at taking leave.

Don Car. I'faith, Isaac, she is the hardest woman to compliment I ever saw; however, I'll try something I had studied for the occasion.

SONG.

Ah! sure a pair was never seen
So justly form'd to meet by nature!
The youth excelling so in mien,
The maid in ev'ry grace of feature.
Oh, how happy are such lovers,
When kindred beauties each discovers!
For surely she
Was made for thee,
And thou to bless this lovely creature!

So mild your looks, your children thence
Will early learn the task of duty—
The boys with all their father's sense,
The girls with all their mother's beauty!
Oh, how happy to inherit
At once such graces and such spirit!
Thus while you live
May fortune give
Each blessing equal to your merit! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Library in* DON JEROME'S *House.*

DON JEROME *and* DON FERDINAND *discovered.*

Don Jer. Object to Antonio! I have said it. His poverty, can you acquit him of that?

Don Ferd. Sir, I own he is not over rich; but he is of as ancient and honourable a family as any in the kingdom.

Don Jer. Yes, I know the beggars are a very ancient family in most kingdoms; but never in great repute, boy.

Don Ferd. Antonio, sir, has many amiable qualities.

Don Jer. But he is poor; can you clear him of that, I say?

Is he not a gay, dissipated rake, who has squandered his patrimony?

Don Ferd. Sir, he inherited but little; and that, his generosity, more than his profuseness, has stripped him of; but he has never sullied his honour, which, with his title, has outlived his means.

Don Jer. Psha! you talk like a blockhead! nobility, without an estate, is as ridiculous as gold lace on a frieze coat.

Don Ferd. This language, sir, would better become a Dutch or English trader than a Spaniard.

Don Jer. Yes; and those Dutch and English traders, as you call them, are the wiser people. Why, booby, in England they were formerly as nice, as to birth and family, as we are: but they have long discovered what a wonderful purifier gold is; and now, no one there regards pedigree in anything but a horse. Oh, here comes Isaac! I hope he has prospered in his suit.

Don Ferd. Doubtless, that agreeable figure of his must have helped his suit surprisingly.

Don Jer. How now? [DON FERDINAND *walks aside.*

Enter ISAAC.

Well, my friend, have you softened her?

Isaac. Oh, yes; I have softened her.

Don Jer. What, does she come to?

Isaac. Why, truly, she was kinder than I expected to find her.

Don Jer. And the dear little angel was civil, eh?

Isaac. Yes, the pretty little angel was very civil.

Don Jer. I'm transported to hear it! Well, and you were astonished at her beauty, hey?

Isaac. I was astonished, indeed! Pray, how old is miss?

Don Jer. How old! let me see—eight and twelve—she is twenty.

Isaac. Twenty?

Don Jer. Ay, to a month.

Isaac. Then, upon my soul, she is the oldest-looking girl of her age in Christendom!

Don Jer. Do you think so? But, I believe, you will not see a prettier girl.

Isaac. Here and there one.

Don Jer. Louisa has the family face.

Isaac. Yes, egad, I should have taken it for a family face, and one that has been in the family some time too. [*Aside.*

Don Jer. She has her father's eyes.

Isaac. Truly, I should have guessed them to have been so! If she had her mother's spectacles, I believe she would not see the worse. [*Aside.*

Don Jer. Her aunt Ursula's nose, and her grandmother's forehead, to a hair.

Isaac. Ay, 'faith, and her grandfather's chin, to a hair. [*Aside.*

Don Jer. Well, if she was but as dutiful as she's handsome—and hark ye, friend Isaac, she is none of your made-up beauties—her charms are of the lasting kind.

Isaac. I'faith, so they should—for if she be but twenty now, she may double her age before her years will overtake her face.

Don Jer. Why, zounds, Master Isaac! you are not sneering, are you?

Isaac. Why now, seriously, Don Jerome, do you think your daughter handsome?

Don Jer. By this light, she's as handsome a girl as any in Seville.

Isaac. Then by these eyes, I think her as plain a woman as ever I beheld.

Don Jer. By St. Iago! you must be blind.

Isaac. No, no; 'tis you are partial.

Don Jer. How! have I neither sense nor taste? If a fair skin, fine eyes, teeth of ivory, with a lovely bloom, and a delicate shape—if these, with a heavenly voice, and a world of grace, are not charms, I know not what you call beautiful.

Isaac. Good lack, with what eyes a father sees! As I have life, she is the very reverse of all this: as for the dimity skin you told me of, I swear 'tis a thorough nankeen as ever I saw! for her eyes, their utmost merit is not squinting—for her teeth, where there is one of ivory, its neighbour is pure ebony, black and white alternately, just like the keys of a harpsichord. Then, as to her singing, and heavenly voice—by this hand, she has a shrill, cracked pipe, that sounds, for all the world, like a child's trumpet.

Don Jer. Why, you little Hebrew scoundrel, do you mean to insult me? Out of my house, I say!

Don Ferd. [*Coming forward.*] Dear sir, what's the matter?

Don Jer. Why, this Israelite here has the impudence to say your sister's ugly.

Don Ferd. He must be either blind or insolent.

Isaac. So, I find they are all in a story. Egad, I believe I have gone too far! [*Aside.*

Don Ferd. Sure, sir, there must be some mistake; it can't be my sister whom he has seen.

Don Jer. 'Sdeath! you are as great a fool as he! What mistake can there be? Did not I lock up Louisa, and haven't I the key in my own pocket? and didn't her maid show him into the dressing-room? and yet you talk of a mistake! No, the Portuguese meant to insult me—and, but that this roof protects him, old as I am, this sword should do me justice.

Isaac. I must get off as well as I can—her fortune is not the less handsome. [*Aside.*

DUET.

Isaac. Believe me, good sir, I ne'er meant to offend;
My mistress I love, and I value my friend:
To win her and wed her is still my request,
For better for worse—and I swear I don't jest.
Don Jer. Zounds! you'd best not provoke me, my rage is so high!
Isaac. Hold him fast, I beseech you, his rage is so high!
Good sir, you're too hot, and this place I must fly.
Don Jer. You're a knave and a sot, and this place you'd best fly.

Isaac. Don Jerome, come now, let us lay aside all joking, and be serious.

Don Jer. How?

Isaac. Ha! ha! ha! I'll be hanged if you haven't taken my abuse of your daughter seriously.

Don Jer. You meant it so did not you?

Isaac. O mercy, no! a joke—just to try how angry it would make you.

Don Jer. Was that all, i'faith? I didn't know you had been such a wag. Ha! ha! ha! By St. Iago! you made me very angry, though. Well, and you do think Louisa handsome?

Isaac. Handsome! Venus de Medicis was a sibyl to her.

Don Jer. Give me your hand, you little jocose rogue! Egad, I thought we had been all off.

Don Ferd. So! I was in hopes this would have been a quarrel; but I find the Jew is too cunning. [*Aside.*

Don Jer. Ay, this gust of passion has made me dry—I am seldom ruffled. Order some wine in the next room—let us drink the poor girl's health. Poor Louisa! ugly, eh! ha! ha! ha! 'twas a very good joke, indeed!

Isaac. And a very true one, for all that. [*Aside.*

Don Jer. And, Ferdinand, I insist upon your drinking success to my friend.

Don Ferd. Sir, I will drink success to my friend with all my heart.

Don Jer. Come, little Solomon, if any sparks of anger had remained, this would be the only way to quench them.

TRIO.

A bumper of good liquor
Will end a contest quicker
Than justice, judge, or vicar;
So fill a cheerful glass,
And let good humour pass.
But if more deep the quarrel,
Why, sooner drain the barrel
Than be the hateful fellow
That's crabbed when he's mellow.
A bumper, &c. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—ISAAC'S *Lodgings.*

Enter DONNA LOUISA.

Don. Louisa. Was ever truant daughter so whimsically circumstanced as I am? I have sent my intended husband to look after my lover—the man of my father's choice is gone to bring me the man of my own: but how dispiriting is this interval of expectation!

SONG.

What bard, O Time, discover,
With wings first made thee move?
Ah! sure it was some lover
Who ne'er had left his love!
For who that once did prove
The pangs which absence brings,
Though but one day
He were away,
Could picture thee with wings?
What bard, &c.

Enter DON CARLOS.

So, friend, is Antonio found?

Don Car. I could not meet with him, lady; but I doubt not my friend Isaac will be here with him presently.

Don. Louisa. Oh, shame! you have used no diligence. Is this your courtesy to a lady, who has trusted herself to your protection

Don Car. Indeed, madam, I have not been remiss.

Don. Louisa. Well, well; but if either of you had known how each moment of delay weighs upon the heart of her who loves, and waits the object of her love, oh, ye would not then have trifled thus!

Don Car. Alas, I know it well!

Don. Louisa. Were you ever in love, then?

Don Car. I was, lady; but, while I have life, will never be again.

Don. Louisa. Was your mistress so cruel?

Don Car. If she had always been so, I should have been happier.

SONG.

Oh, had my love ne'er smiled on me,
I ne'er had known such anguish;
But think how false, how cruel she,
To bid me cease to languish;
To bid me hope her hand to gain,
Breathe on a flame half perish'd;
And then with cold and fixed disdain,
To kill the hope she cherish'd.

Not worse his fate, who on a wreck,
That drove as winds did blow it,
Silent had left the shatter'd deck,
To find a grave below it.
Then land was cried—no more resign'd,
He glow'd with joy to hear it;
Not worse his fate, his woe, to find
The wreck must sink ere near it!

Don. Louisa. As I live, here is your friend coming with Antonio! I'll retire for a moment to surprise him. [*Exit.*

Enter ISAAC *and* DON ANTONIO.

Don Ant. Indeed, my good friend, you must be mistaken. Clara d'Almanza in love with me, and employ you to bring me to meet her! It is impossible!

Isaac. That you shall see in an instant. Carlos, where is the lady?—[DON CARLOS *points to the door.*] In the next room, is she?

Don Ant. Nay, if that lady is really here, she certainly wants me to conduct her to a dear friend of mine, who has long been her lover.

Isaac. Psha! I tell you 'tis no such thing—you are the man she wants and nobody but you. Here's ado to persuade you to take a pretty girl that's dying for you!

Don Ant. But I have no affection for this lady.

Isaac. And you have for Louisa, hey? But take my word for it, Antonio, you have no chance there—so you may as well secure the good that offers itself to you.

Don Ant. And could you reconcile it to your conscience to supplant your friend?

Isaac. Pish! Conscience has no more to do with gallantry than it has with politics. Why, you are no honest fellow if love can't make a rogue of you—so come—do go in and speak to her, at least.

Don Ant. Well, I have no objection to that.

Isaac. [*Opens the door.*] There—there she is—yonder by the window—get in, do.—[*Pushes him in, and half shuts the door.*] Now, Carlos, now I shall hamper him, I warrant! Stay, I'll

peep how they go on. Egad, he looks confoundedly posed! Now she's coaxing him. See, Carlos, he begins to come to—ay, ay, he'll soon forget his conscience.

Don Car. Look—now they are both laughing!

Isaac. Ay, so they are—yes, yes, they are laughing at that dear friend he talked of—ay, poor devil, they have outwitted him.

Don Car. Now he's kissing her hand.

Isaac. Yes, yes, 'faith, they're agreed—he's caught, he's entangled. My dear Carlos, we have brought it about. Oh, this little cunning head! I'm a Machiavel—a very Machiavel!

Don Car. I hear somebody inquiring for you—I'll see who it is. [*Exit.*

Re-enter DON ANTONIO *and* DONNA LOUISA.

Don Ant. Well, my good friend, this lady has so entirely convinced me of the certainty of your success at Don Jerome's, that I now resign my pretensions there.

Isaac. You never did a wiser thing, believe me; and, as for deceiving your friend, that's nothing at all—tricking is all fair in love, isn't it, ma'am?

Don. Louisa. Certainly, sir; and I am particularly glad to find you are of that opinion.

Isaac. O lud! yes, ma'am—let any one outwit me that can, I say! But here, let me join your hands. There, you lucky rogue! I wish you happily married, from the bottom of my soul!

Don. Louisa. And I am sure, if you wish it, no one else should prevent it.

Isaac. Now, Antonio, we are rivals no more; so let us be friends, will you?

Don Ant. With all my heart, Isaac.

Isaac. It is not every man, let me tell you, that would have taken such pains, or been so generous to a rival.

Don Ant. No, 'faith, I don't believe there's another beside yourself in all Spain.

Isaac. Well, but you resign all pretensions to the other lady?

Don Ant. That I do, most sincerely.

Isaac. I doubt you have a little hankering there still.

Don Ant. None in the least, upon my soul.

Isaac. I mean after her fortune.

Don Ant. No, believe me. You are heartily welcome to every thing she has.

Isaac. Well, i'faith, you have the best of the bargain, as to beauty, twenty to one. Now I'll tell you a secret—I am to carry off Louisa this very evening.

Don. Louisa. Indeed!

Isaac. Yes, she has sworn not to take a husband from her father's hand—so I've persuaded him to trust her to walk with me in the garden, and then we shall give him the slip.

Don. Louisa. And is Don Jerome to know nothing of this?

Isaac. O Lud, no! there lies the jest. Don't you see that, by this step, I over-reach him? I shall be entitled to the girl's fortune, without settling a ducat on her. Ha! ha! ha! I'm a cunning dog, an't I? a sly little villain, eh?

Don Ant. Ha! ha! ha! you are indeed!

Isaac. Roguish, you'll say, but keen, eh? devilish keen?

Don Ant. So you are indeed—keen—very keen.

Isaac. And what a laugh we shall have at Don Jerome's when the truth comes out! hey?

Don. Louisa. Yes, I'll answer for it, we shall have a good laugh, when the truth comes out. Ha! ha! ha!

Re-enter DON CARLOS.

Don Car. Here are the dancers come to practise the fandango you intended to have honoured Donna Louisa with.

Isaac. Oh, I shan't want them; but, as I must pay them, I'll see a caper for my money. Will you excuse me?

Don. Louisa. Willingly.

Isaac. Here's my friend, whom you may command for any service. Madam, your most obedient—Antonio, I wish you all happiness.—[*Aside.*] Oh, the easy blockhead! what a tool I have made of him!—This was a masterpiece! [*Exit.*

Don. Louisa. Carlos, will you be my guard again, and convey me to the convent of St. Catharine?

Don Ant. Why, Louisa—why should you go there?

Don. Louisa. I have my reasons, and you must not be seen to go with me; I shall write from thence to my father; perhaps, when he finds what he has driven me to, he may relent.

Don Ant. I have no hope from him. O Louisa! in these arms should be your sanctuary.

Don. Louisa. Be patient but for a little while—my father cannot force me from thence. But let me see you there before evening, and I will explain myself.

Don Ant. I shall obey.

Don. Louisa. Come, friend. Antonio, Carlos has been a lover himself.

Don Ant. Then he knows the value of his trust.

Don Car. You shall not find me unfaithful.

TRIO.

Soft pity never leaves the gentle breast
Where love has been received a welcome guest;

As wandering saints poor huts have sacred made,
He hallows every heart he once has sway'd,
And, when his presence we no longer share,
Still leaves compassion as a relic there. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Library in* DON JEROME'S *House.*

Enter DON JEROME *and* SERVANT.

Don Jer. Why, I never was so amazed in my life! Louisa gone off with Isaac Mendoza! What! steal away with the very man whom I wanted her to marry—elope with her own husband, as it were—it is impossible!

Ser. Her maid says, sir, they had your leave to walk in the garden, while you were abroad. The door by the shrubbery was found open, and they have not been heard of since. [*Exit.*

Don Jer. Well, it is the most unaccountable affair! 'sdeath! there is certainly some infernal mystery in it I can't comprehend!

Enter SECOND SERVANT, *with a letter.*

Ser. Here is a letter, sir, from Signor Isaac. [*Exit.*

Don Jer. So, so, this will explain—ay, Isaac Mendoza—let me see—— [*Reads.*

Dearest Sir,

You must, doubtless, be much surprised at my flight with your daughter!—yes, 'faith, and well I may—*I had the happiness to gain her heart at our first interview.*—The devil you had!—*But, she having unfortunately made a vow not to receive a husband from your hands, I was obliged to comply with her whim!*—So, so!—*We shall shortly throw ourselves at your feet, and I hope you will have a blessing ready for one, who will then be your son-in-law,* ISAAC MENDOZA.

A whim, hey? Why, the devil's in the girl, I think! This morning, she would die sooner than have him, and before evening she runs away with him! Well, well, my will's accomplished—let the motive be what it will—and the Portuguese, sure, will never deny to fulfil the rest of the article.

Re-enter SERVANT, *with another letter.*

Ser. Sir, here's a man below, who says he brought this from my young lady, Donna Louisa. [*Exit.*

Don Jer. How! yes, it's my daughter's hand, indeed! Lord, there was no occasion for them both to write; well, let's see what she says—— [*Reads.*

My dearest father,

How shall I entreat your pardon for the rash step I have taken —how confess the motive?—Pish! hasn't Isaac just told me the

motive?—one would think they weren't together when they wrote.—*If I have a spirit too resentful of ill usage, I have also a heart as easily affected by kindness.*—So, so, here the whole matter comes out; her resentment for Antonio's ill usage has made her sensible of Isaac's kindness—yes, yes, it is all plain enough. Well.—*I am not married yet, though with a man who, I am convinced, adores me.*—Yes, yes, I dare say Isaac is very fond of her.—*But I shall anxiously expect your answer, in which, should I be so fortunate as to receive your consent, you will make completely happy your ever affectionate daughter,* LOUISA.

My consent! to be sure she shall have it! Egad, I was never better pleased — I have fulfilled my resolution — I knew I should. Oh, there's nothing like obstinacy! Lewis! [*Calls.*

Re-enter SERVANT.

Let the man, who brought the last letter, wait; and get me a pen and ink below.—[*Exit* SERVANT.] I am impatient to set poor Louisa's heart at rest. Holloa! Lewis! Sancho! [*Calls.*

Enter SERVANTS.

See that there be a noble supper provided in the saloon to-night; serve up my best wines, and let me have music, d'ye hear?

Ser. Yes, sir.

Don Jer. And order all my doors to be thrown open; admit all guests, with masks or without masks.—[*Exeunt* SERVANTS.] I'faith, we'll have a night of it! and I'll let them see how merry an old man can be.

SONG.

Oh, the days when I was young,
  When I laugh'd in fortune's spite;
Talk'd of love the whole day long,
  And with nectar crown'd the night!
Then it was, old Father Care,
  Little reck'd I of thy frown;
Half thy malice youth could bear,
  And the rest a bumper drown.

Truth, they say, lies in a well,
  Why, I vow I ne'er could see;
Let the water-drinkers tell,
  There it always lay for me.
For when sparkling wine went round,
  Never saw I falsehood's mask;
But still honest truth I found
  In the bottom of each flask.

True, at length my vigour's flown,
  I have years to bring decay;
Few the locks that now I own,
  And the few I have are grey.

Yet, old Jerome, thou mayst boast,
While thy spirits do not tire;
Still beneath thy age's frost
Glows a spark of youthful fire. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*The New Piazza.*

Enter DON FERDINAND *and* LOPEZ.

Don Ferd. What, could you gather no tidings of her? nor guess where she was gone? O Clara! Clara!

Lop. In truth, sir, I could not. That she was run away from her father, was in everybody's mouth; and that Don Guzman was in pursuit of her, was also a very common report. Where she was gone, or what was become of her, no one could take upon them to say.

Don Ferd. 'Sdeath and fury, you blockhead! she can't be out of Seville.

Lop. So I said to myself, sir. 'Sdeath and fury, you blockhead, says I, she can't be out of Seville. Then some said, she had hanged herself for love; and others have it, Don Antonio had carried her off.

Don Ferd. 'Tis false, scoundrel! no one said that.

Lop. Then I misunderstood them, sir.

Don Ferd. Go, fool, get home! and never let me see you again till you bring me news of her.—[*Exit* LOPEZ.] Oh, how my fondness for this ungrateful girl has hurt my disposition.

Enter ISAAC.

Isaac. So, I have her safe, and have only to find a priest to marry us. Antonio now may marry Clara, or not, if he pleases.

Don Ferd. What! what was that you said of Clara?

Isaac. Oh, Ferdinand! my brother-in-law that shall be, who thought of meeting you?

Don Ferd. But what of Clara?

Isaac. I'faith, you shall hear. This morning, as I was coming down, I met a pretty damsel, who told me her name was Clara d'Almanza, and begged my protection.

Don Ferd. How!

Isaac. She said she had eloped from her father, Don Guzman, but that love for a young gentleman in Seville was the cause.

Don Ferd. Oh, Heavens! did she confess it?

Isaac. Oh, yes, she confessed at once. But then, says she, my lover is not informed of my flight, nor suspects my intention.

Don Ferd. [*Aside.*] Dear creature! no more I did indeed! Oh, I am the happiest fellow!—[*Aloud.*] Well, Isaac?

Isaac. Why then she entreated me to find him out for her, and bring him to her.

Don Ferd. Good Heavens, how lucky! Well, come along, let's lose no time. [*Pulling him.*

Isaac. Zooks! where are we to go?

Don Ferd. Why, did anything more pass?

Isaac. Anything more! yes; the end on't was, that I was moved with her speeches, and complied with her desires.

Don Ferd. Well, and where is she?

Isaac. Where is she! why, don't I tell you? I complied with her request, and left her safe in the arms of her lover.

Don Ferd. 'Sdeath, you trifle with me!—I have never seen her.

Isaac. You! O Lud, no! how the devil should you? 'Twas Antonio she wanted; and with Antonio I left her.

Don Ferd. [*Aside.*] Hell and madness!—[*Aloud.*] What, Antonio d'Ercilla?

Isaac. Ay, ay, the very man; and the best part of it was, he was shy of taking her at first. He talked a good deal about honour, and conscience, and deceiving some dear friend; but, Lord, we soon overruled that!

Don Ferd. You did!

Isaac. Oh, yes, presently.—Such deceit! says he.—Pish! says the lady, tricking is all fair in love. But then, my friend, says he.—Psha! damn your friend, says I. So, poor wretch, he has no chance.—No, no; he may hang himself as soon as he pleases.

Don Ferd. I must go, or I shall betray myself. [*Aside.*

Isaac. But stay, Ferdinand, you han't heard the best of the joke.

Don Ferd. Curse on your joke!

Isaac. Good lack! what's the matter now? I thought to have diverted you.

Don Ferd. Be racked! tortured! damned!

Isaac. Why, sure you are not the poor devil of a lover, are you?—I'faith, as sure as can be, he is! This is a better joke than t'other. Ha! ha! ha!

Don Ferd. What! do you laugh? you vile, mischievous varlet!—[*Collars him.*] But that you're beneath my anger, I'd tear your heart out! [*Throws him from him.*

Isaac. O mercy! here's usage for a brother-in-law!

Don Ferd. But, hark ye, rascal! tell me directly where these false friends are gone, or, by my soul—— [*Draws.*

Isaac. For Heaven's sake, now, my dear brother-in-law, don't be in a rage! I'll recollect as well as I can.

Don Ferd. Be quick then!

Isaac. I will, I will!—but people's memories differ; some have a treacherous memory: now mine is a cowardly memory—it takes to its heels at sight of a drawn sword, it does i'faith; and I could as soon fight as recollect.

Don Ferd. Zounds! tell me the truth, and I won't hurt you.

Isaac. No, no, I know you won't, my dear brother-in-law; but that ill-looking thing there——

Don Ferd. What, then, you won't tell me?

Isaac. Yes, yes, I will; I'll tell you all, upon my soul!—but why need you listen, sword in hand?

Don Ferd. Why, there.—[*Puts up.*] Now.

Isaac. Why, then, I believe they are gone to—that is, my friend Carlos told me, he had left Donna Clara—dear Ferdinand, keep your hands off—at the convent of St. Catharine.

Don Ferd. St. Catharine!

Isaac. Yes; and that Antonio was to come to her there.

Don Ferd. Is this the truth?

Isaac. It is indeed; and all I know, as I hope for life!

Don Ferd. Well, coward, take your life; 'tis that false, dishonourable Antonio, who shall feel my vengeance.

Isaac. Ay, ay, kill him; cut his throat, and welcome.

Don Ferd. But, for Clara! infamy on her! she is not worth my resentment.

Isaac. No more she is, my dear brother-in-law. I'faith, I would not be angry about her; she is not worth it, indeed.

Don. Ferd. 'Tis false! she is worth the enmity of princes!

Isaac. True, true, so she is; and I pity you exceedingly for having lost her.

Don. Ferd. 'Sdeath, you rascal! how durst you talk of pitying me?

Isaac. Oh, dear brother-in-law, I beg pardon! I don't pity you in the least, upon my soul!

Don Ferd. Get hence, fool, and provoke me no further; nothing but your insignificance saves you!

Isaac. [*Aside.*] I'faith, then, my insignificance is the best friend I have.—[*Aloud.*] I'm going, dear Ferdinand.—[*Aside.*] What a curst hot-headed bully it is! [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE III.—*The Garden of the Convent.*

Enter DONNA LOUISA *and* DONNA CLARA.

Don. Louisa. And you really wish my brother may not find you not?

Don. Clara. Why else have I concealed myself under this disguise?

Don. Louisa. Why, perhaps, because the dress becomes you: for you certainly don't intend to be a nun for life.

Don. Clara. If, indeed, Ferdinand had not offended me so last night——

Don. Louisa. Come, come, it was his fear of losing you made him so rash.

Don. Clara. Well, you may think me cruel, but I swear, if he were here this instant, I believe I should forgive him.

SONG.

By him we love offended,
How soon our anger flies!
One day apart, 'tis ended;
Behold him, and it dies.

Last night, your roving brother,
Enraged, I bade depart;
And sure his rude presumption
Deserved to lose my heart.

Yet, were he now before me,
In spite of injured pride,
I fear my eyes would pardon
Before my tongue could chide.

Don. Louisa. I protest, Clara, I shall begin to think you are seriously resolved to enter on your probation.

Don. Clara. And, seriously, I very much doubt whether the character of a nun would not become me best.

Don. Louisa. Why, to be sure, the character of a nun is a very becoming one at a masquerade: but no pretty woman, in her senses, ever thought of taking the veil for above a night.

Don. Clara. Yonder I see your Antonio is returned—I shall only interrupt you; ah, Louisa, with what happy eagerness you turn to look for him! [*Exit*

Enter DON ANTONIO.

Don Ant. Well, my Louisa, any news since I left you?

Don. Louisa. None. The messenger is not yet returned from my father.

Don Ant. Well, I confess, I do not perceive what we are to expect from him.

Don. Louisa. I shall be easier, however, in having made the trial: I do not doubt your sincerity, Antonio; but there is a chilling air around poverty, that often kills affection, that was not nursed in it. If we would make love our household god, we had best secure him a comfortable roof.

SONG.—*Don Antonio.*

How oft, Louisa, hast thou told,
(Nor wilt thou the fond boast disown,)
Thou wouldst not lose Antonio's love
To reign the partner of a throne.
And by those lips, that spoke so kind,
And by that hand, I've press'd to mine,
To be the lord of wealth and power,
By heavens, I would not part with thine!

Then how, my soul, can we be poor,
Who own what kingdoms could not buy?
Of this true heart thou shalt be queen,
In serving thee, a monarch I.
Thus uncontroll'd, in mutual bliss,
I rich in love's exhaustless mine,
Do thou snatch treasures from my lips,
And I'll take kingdoms back from thine!

Enter MAID, *with a letter.*

Don. Louisa. My father's answer, I suppose.

Don Ant. My dearest Louisa, you may be assured that it contains nothing but threats and reproaches.

Don. Louisa. Let us see, however.—[Reads.] *Dearest daughter, make your lover happy; you have my full consent to marry as your whim has chosen, but be sure come home and sup with your affectionate father.*

Don Ant. You jest, Louisa!

Don. Louisa. [*Gives him the letter.*] Read! read!

Don Ant. 'Tis so, by heavens! Sure there must be some mistake; but that's none of our business.——Now, Louisa, you have no excuse for delay.

Don. Louisa. Shall we not then return and thank my father?

Don Ant. But first let the priest put it out of his power to recall his word.—I'll fly to procure one.

Don. Louisa. Nay, if you part with me again, perhaps you may lose me.

Don Ant. Come then—there is a friar of a neighbouring convent is my friend; you have already been diverted by the manners of a nunnery; let us see whether there is less hypocrisy among the holy fathers.

Don. Louisa. I'm afraid not, Antonio—for in religion, as in friendship, they who profess most are ever the least sincere.

[*Exeunt.*

Re-enter DONNA CLARA.

Don. Clara. So, yonder they go, as happy as a mutual and confessed affection can make them, while I am left in solitude. Heigho! love may perhaps excuse the rashness of an elope-

ment from one's friend, but I am sure nothing but the presence of the man we love can support it. Ha! what do I see! Ferdinand, as I live, how could he gain admission? By potent gold, I suppose, as Antonio did. How eager and disturbed he seems! He shall not know me as yet. [*Lets down her veil.*

Enter DON FERDINAND.

Don Ferd. Yes, those were certainly they—my information was right. [*Going.*

Don. Clara. [*Stops him.*] Pray, signor, what is your business here?

Don Ferd. No matter—no matter! Oh, they stop.—[*Looks out.*] Yes, that is the perfidious Clara indeed!

Don. Clara. So, a jealous error—I'm glad to see him so moved. [*Aside.*

Don Ferd. Her disguise can't conceal her—no, no, I know her too well.

Don. Clara. [*Aside.*] Wonderful discernment!—[*Aloud.*] But, signor——

Don Ferd. Be quiet, good nun; don't tease me!—By heavens, she leans upon his arm, hangs fondly on it! O woman, woman!

Don. Clara. But, signor, who is it you want?

Don Ferd. Not you, not you, so pr'ythee don't tease me. Yet pray stay—gentle nun, was it not Donna Clara d'Almanza just parted from you?

Don. Clara. Clara d'Almanza, signor, is not yet out of the garden.

Don Ferd. Ay, ay, I knew I was right! And pray is not that gentleman, now at the porch with her, Antonio d'Ercilla?

Don. Clara. It is, indeed, signor.

Don Ferd. So, so; now but one question more—can you inform me for what purpose they have gone away?

Don. Clara. They are gone to be married, I believe.

Don Ferd. Very well—enough. Now if I don't mar their wedding! [*Exit.*

Don. Clara. [*Unveils.*] I thought jealousy had made lovers quick-sighted, but it has made mine blind. Louisa's story accounts to me for this error, and I am glad to find I have power enough over him to make him so unhappy. But why should not I be present at his surprise when undeceived? When he's through the porch, I'll follow him; and, perhaps, Louisa shall not singly be a bride.

SONG.

Adieu, thou dreary pile, where never dies
The sullen echo of repentant sighs!

Ye sister mourners of each lonely cell,
Inured to hymns and sorrow, fare ye well!
For happier scenes I fly this darksome grove,
To saints a prison, but a tomb to love!

[*Exit*

SCENE IV.—*A Court before the Priory.*

Enter ISAAC, *crossing the stage*, DON ANTONIO *following*.

Don Ant. What, my friend Isaac!

Isaac. What, Antonio! wish me joy! I have Louisa safe.

Don Ant. Have you? I wish you joy with all my soul.

Isaac. Yes, I am come here to procure a priest to marry us.

Don Ant. So, then, we are both on the same errand; I am come to look for Father Paul.

Isaac. Ha! I'm glad on't—but, i'faith, he must tack me first; my love is waiting.

Don Ant. So is mine—I left her in the porch.

Isaac. Ay, but I am in haste to go back to Don Jerome.

Don Ant. And so am I too.

Isaac. Well, perhaps he'll save time, and marry us both together—or I'll be your father, and you shall be mine. Come along—but you are obliged to me for all this.

Don Ant. Yes, yes. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*A Room in the Priory.*

FATHER PAUL, FATHER FRANCIS, FATHER AUGUSTINE, *and other* FRIARS *discovered at a table drinking.*

GLEE AND CHORUS.

This bottle's the sun of our table,
His beams are rosy wine:
We, planets, that are not able
Without his help to shine.
Let mirth and glee abound!
You'll soon grow bright
With borrow'd light,
And shine as he goes round.

Paul. Brother Francis, toss the bottle about, and give me your toast.

Fran. Have we drunk the Abbess of St. Ursuline?

Paul. Yes, yes; she was the last.

Fran. Then I'll give you the blue-eyed nun of St. Catharine's.

Paul. With all my heart.—[*Drinks.*] Pray, brother Augustine, were there any benefactions left in my absence?

Aug. Don Juan Corduba has left a hundred ducats, to remember him in our masses.

Paul. Has he? let them be paid to our wine-merchant, and

we'll remember him in our cups, which will do just as well. Anything more?

Aug. Yes; Baptista, the rich miser, who died last week, has bequeathed us a thousand pistoles, and the silver lamp he used in his own chamber, to burn before the image of St. Anthony.

Paul. 'Twas well meant, but we'll employ his money better —Baptista's bounty shall light the living, not the dead. St. Anthony is not afraid to be left in the dark, though he was.— [*Knocking.*] See who's there.

[FATHER FRANCIS *goes to the door and opens it*

Enter PORTER.

Port. Here's one without, in pressing haste to speak with father Paul.

Fran. Brother Paul!

[FATHER PAUL *comes from behind a curtain, with a glass of wine, and in his hand a piece of cake.*

Paul. Here! how durst you, fellow, thus abruptly break in upon our devotions?

Port. I thought they were finished.

Paul. No, they were not—were they, brother Francis?

Fran. Not by a bottle each.

Paul. But neither you nor your fellows mark how the hours go; no, you mind nothing but the gratifying of your appetites; ye eat and swill, and sleep, and gourmandise, and thrive, while we are wasting in mortification.

Port. We ask no more than nature craves.

Paul. 'Tis false, ye have more appetites than hairs! and your flushed, sleek, and pampered appearance is the disgrace of our order—out on't! If you are hungry, can't you be content with the wholesome roots of the earth? and if you are dry, isn't there the crystal spring?—[*Drinks.*] Put this away, —[*Gives the glass*] and show me where I'm wanted.—[PORTER *drains the glass.*—PAUL, *going, turns.*] So you would have drunk it if there had been any left! Ah, glutton! glutton!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—*The Court before the Priory.*

Enter ISAAC *and* DON ANTONIO.

Isaac. A plaguy while coming, this same father Paul.—He's detained at vespers, I suppose, poor fellow.

Don Ant. No, here he comes.

Enter FATHER PAUL.

Good father Paul, I crave your blessing.

Isaac. Yes, good father Paul, we are come to beg a favour.

Paul. What is it, pray?

Isaac. To marry us, good father Paul; and in truth thou dost look the priest of Hymen.

Paul. In short, I may be called so; for I deal in repentance and mortification.

Isaac. No, no, thou seemest an officer of Hymen, because thy presence speaks content and good humour.

Paul. Alas! my appearance is deceitful. Bloated I am, indeed! for fasting is a windy recreation, and it hath swollen me like a bladder.

Don Ant. But thou hast a good fresh colour in thy face, father; rosy i'faith!

Paul. Yes, I have blushed for mankind, till the hue of my shame is as fixed as their vices.

Isaac. Good man!

Paul. And I have laboured too, but to what purpose? they continue to sin under my very nose.

Isaac. Efecks, father, I should have guessed as much, for your nose seems to be put to the blush more than any other part of your face.

Paul. Go, you're a wag.

Don Ant. But, to the purpose, father—will you officiate for us?

Paul. To join young people thus clandestinely is not safe: and, indeed, I have in my heart many weighty reasons against it.

Don Ant. And I have in my hand many weighty reasons for it. Isaac, haven't you an argument or two in our favour about you.

Isaac. Yes, yes; here is a most unanswerable purse.

Paul. For shame! you make me angry: you forget who I am, and when importunate people have forced their trash—ay, into this pocket, here—or into this—why, then the sin was theirs.—[*They put money into his pockets.*] Fie, now how you distress me! I would return it, but that I must touch it that way, and so wrong my oath.

Don Ant. Now, then come with us.

Isaac. Ay, now give us our title to joy and rapture.

Paul. Well, when your hour of repentance comes, don't blame me.

Don Ant. [*Aside.*] No bad caution to my friend Isaac.—[*Aloud.*] Well, well, father, do you do your part, and I'll abide the consequence.

Isaac. Ay, and so will I.

Enter DONNA LOUISA, *running.*

Don. Louisa. O Antonio, Ferdinand is at the porch, and inquiring for us.

Isaac. Who? Don Ferdinand! he's not inquiring for me, I hope.

Don Ant. Fear not, my love; I'll soon pacify him.

Isaac. Egad, you won't. Antonio, take my advice, and run away; this Ferdinand is the most unmerciful dog, and has the cursedest long sword! and, upon my soul, he comes on purpose to cut your throat.

Don Ant. Never fear, never fear.

Isaac. Well, you may stay if you will; but I'll get some one to marry me; for by St. Iago, he shall never meet me again, while I am master of a pair of heels.

[*Runs out.*—DONNA LOUISA *lets down her veil.*

Enter DON FERDINAND.

Don Ferd. So, sir, I have met with you at last.

Don Ant. Well, sir.

Don Ferd. Base, treacherous man! whence can a false, deceitful soul, like yours, borrow confidence to look so steadily on the man you've injured?

Don Ant. Ferdinand, you are too warm: 'tis true you find me on the point of wedding one I loved beyond my life; but no argument of mine prevailed on her to elope—I scorn deceit, as much as you. By heaven I knew not that she had left her father's till I saw her!

Don Ferd. What a mean excuse! You have wronged your friend, then, for one, whose wantom forwardness anticipated your treachery—of this, indeed, your Jew pander informed me; but let your conduct be consistent, and since you have dared to do a wrong, follow me, and show you have a spirit to avow it.

Don. Louisa. Antonio, I preceive his mistake—leave him to me.

Paul. Friend, you are rude, to interrupt the union of two willing hearts.

Don Ferd. No, meddling priest! the hand he seeks is mine.

Paul. If so, I'll proceed no further. Lady, did you ever promise this youth your hand?

[*To* DONNA LOUISA, *who shakes her head.*

Don Ferd. Clara, I thank you for your silence— I would not have heard your tongue avow such falsity; be't your punishment to remember I have not reproached you.

Enter DONNA CLARA, *veiled.*

Don. Clara. What mockery is this?

Don Ferd. Antonio, you are protected now, but we shall meet.

[*Going,* DONNA CLARA *holds one arm, and* DONNA LOUISA *the other.*

DUET.

Don. Louisa. Turn thee round, I pray thee,
Calm awhile thy rage.
Don. Clara. I must help to stay thee,
And thy wrath assuage.
Don. Louisa. Couldst thou not discover
One so dear to thee?
Don. Clara. Canst thou be a lover,
And thus fly from me? [*Both unveil.*

Don Ferd. How's this? My sister! Clara, too—I'm confounded.

Don. Louisa. 'Tis even so, good brother.

Paul. How! what impiety? did the man want to marry his own sister?

Don. Louisa. And ar'n't you ashamed of yourself not to know your own sister?

Don. Clara. To drive away your own mistress——

Don. Louisa. Don't you see how jealousy blinds people?

Don. Clara. Ay, and will you ever be jealous again?

Don Ferd. Never—never!—You, sister, I know will forgive me—but how, Clara, shall I presume——

Don. Clara. No, no, just now you told me not to tease you—"Who do you want, good signor?" "Not you, not you!"—Oh, you blind wretch! but swear never to be jealous again, and I'll forgive you.

Don Ferd. By all——

Don. Clara. There, that will do—you'll keep the oath just as well. [*Gives her hand.*

Don. Louisa. But, brother, here is one to whom some apology is due.

Don Ferd. Antonio, I am ashamed to think——

Don Ant. Not a word of excuse, Ferdinand—I have not been in love myself without learning that a lover's anger should never be resented. But come—let us retire with this good father, and we'll explain to you the cause of this error.

GLEE AND CHORUS.

Oft does Hymen smile to hear
Wordy vows of feign'd regard;
Well he knows when they're sincere,
Never slow to give reward:
For his glory is to prove
Kind to those who wed for love. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.—*A Grand Saloon in* DON JEROME'S *House.*

Enter DON JEROME, LOPEZ, *and* SERVANTS.

Don Jer. Be sure, now, let everything be in the best order—let all my servants have on their merriest faces: but tell them to get as little drunk as possible, till after supper.—[*Exeunt* SERVANTS.] So, Lopez, where's your master? shan't we have him at supper?

Lop. Indeed, I believe not, sir—he's mad, I doubt! I'm sure he has frighted me from him.

Don Jer. Ay, ay, he's after some wench, I suppose: a young rake! Well, well, we'll be merry without him. [*Exit* LOPEZ.

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. Sir, here is Signor Isaac. [*Exit.*

Enter ISAAC.

Don Jer. So, my dear son-in-law—there, take my blessing and forgiveness. But where's my daughter? where's Louisa?

Isaac. She's without, impatient for a blessing, but almost afraid to enter.

Don Jer. Oh, fly and bring her in.—[*Exit* ISAAC.] Poor girl, I long to see her pretty face.

Isaac. [*Without.*] Come, my charmer! my trembling angel!

Re-enter ISAAC *with* DUENNA; DON JEROME *runs to meet them; she kneels.*

Don Jer. Come to my arms, my—[*Starts back.*] Why, who the devil have we here?

Isaac. Nay, Don Jerome, you promised her forgiveness; see how the dear creature droops!

Don Jer. Droops indeed! Why, Gad take me, this is old Margaret! But where's my daughter? where's Louisa?

Isaac. Why, here, before your eyes—nay, don't be abashed, my sweet wife!

Don Jer. Wife with a vengeance! Why, zounds! you have not married the Duenna!

Duen. [*Kneeling.*] Oh, dear papa! you'll not disown me, sure!

Don Jer. Papa! papa! Why, zounds! your impudence is as great as your ugliness!

Isaac. Rise, my charmer, go throw your snowy arms about his neck, and convince him you are——

Duen. Oh, sir, forgive me! [*Embraces him.*

Don Jer. Help! murder!

Enter SERVANTS.

Ser. What's the matter, sir?

Don Jer. Why, here, this damned Jew has brought an old harridan to strangle me.

Isaac. Lord, it is his own daughter, and he is so hard-hearted he won't forgive her!

Enter DON ANTONIO *and* DONNA LOUISA; *they kneel.*

Don Jer. Zounds and fury! what's here now? who sent for you, sir, and who the devil are you?

Don Ant. This lady's husband, sir.

Isaac. Ay, that he is, I'll be sworn; for I left them with a priest, and was to have given her away.

Don Jer. You were?

Isaac. Ay; that's my honest friend, Antonio; and that's the little girl I told you I had hampered him with.

Don Jer. Why, you are either drunk or mad—this is my daughter.

Isaac. No, no; 'tis you are both drunk and mad, I think—here's your daughter.

Don Jer. Hark ye, old iniquity! will you explain all this, or not?

Duen. Come then, Don Jerome, I will—though our habits might inform you all. Look on your daughter, there, and on me.

Isaac. What's this I hear?

Duen. The truth is, that in your passion this morning you made a small mistake; for you turned your daughter out of doors, and locked up your humble servant.

Isaac. O Lud! O Lud! here's a pretty fellow, to turn his daughter out of doors, instead of an old Duenna!

Don Jer. And, O Lud! O Lud! here's a pretty fellow, to marry an old Duenna instead of my daughter! But how came the rest about?

Duen. I have only to add, that I remained in your daughter's place, and had the good fortune to engage the affections of my sweet husband here.

Isaac. Her husband! why, you old witch, do you think I'll be your husband now? This is a trick, a cheat! and you ought all to be ashamed of yourselves.

Don Ant. Hark ye, Isaac, do you dare to complain of tricking? Don Jerome, I give you my word, this cunning Portuguese has brought all this upon himself, by endeavouring to over-reach you, by getting your daughter's fortune, without making any settlement in return.

Don Jer. Over-reach me!

Don. Louisa. 'Tis so, indeed, sir, and we can prove it to you.

Don Jer. Why, Gad take me, it must be so, or he could never have put up with such a face as Margaret's—so, little Solomon, I wish you joy of your wife, with all my soul.

Don. Louisa. Isaac, tricking is all fair in love—let you alone for the plot!

Don Ant. A cunning dog, ar'n't you? A sly little villain, eh?

Don. Louisa. Roguish, perhaps; but keen, devilish keen!

Don. Jer. Yes, yes; his aunt always called him little Solomon.

Isaac. Why, the plagues of Egypt upon you all!—but do you think I'll submit to such an imposition?

Don Ant. Isaac, one serious word—you'd better be content as you are; for, believe me, you will find that, in the opinion of the world, there is not a fairer subject for contempt and ridicule than a knave become the dupe of his own art.

Isaac. I don't care—I'll not endure this. Don Jerome, 'tis you have done this—you would be so cursed positive about the beauty of her you locked up, and all the time I told you she was as old as my mother, and as ugly as the devil.

Duen. Why, you little insignificant reptile!——

Don Jer. That's right!—attack him, Margaret.

Duen. Dare such a thing as you pretend to talk of beauty?—A walking rouleau!—a body that seems to owe all its consequence to the dropsy!—a pair of eyes like two dead beetles in a wad of brown dough!—a beard like an artichoke, with dry shrivelled jaws, that would disgrace the mummy of a monkey!

Don Jer. Well done, Margaret!

Duen. But you shall know that I have a brother who wears a sword—and, if you don't do me justice——

Isaac. Fire seize your brother, and you too! I'll fly to Jerusalem to avoid you!

Duen. Fly where you will, I'll follow you.

Don Jer. Throw your snowy arms about him, Margaret.—[*Exeunt* ISAAC *and* DUENNA.] But, Louisa, are you really married to this modest gentleman?

Don. Louisa. Sir, in obedience to your commands, I gave him my hand within this hour.

Don Jer. My commands!

Don Ant. Yes, sir; here is your consent, under your own hand.

Don Jer. How! would you rob me of my child by a trick, a false pretence? and do you think to get her fortune by the same means? Why, 'slife! you are as great a rogue as Isaac!

Don Ant. No, Don Jerome; though I have profited by this paper in gaining your daughter's hand, I scorn to obtain her fortune by deceit. There, sir.—[*Gives a letter.*] Now give her your blessing for a dower, and all the little I possess shall be settled on her in return. Had you wedded her to a prince, he could do no more.

Don Jer. Why, Gad take me, but you are a very extraordinary fellow! But have you the impudence to suppose no one can do a generous action but yourself? Here, Louisa, tell this proud fool of yours that he's the only man I know that would renounce your fortune; and, by my soul! he's the only man in Spain that's worthy of it. There, bless you both: I'm an obstinate old fellow when I'm in the wrong; but you shall now find me as steady in the right.

Enter DON FERDINAND *and* DONNA CLARA.

Another wonder still! Why, sirrah! Ferdinand, you have not stole a nun, have you?

Don Ferd. She is a nun in nothing but her habit, sir—look nearer, and you will perceive 'tis Clara d'Almanza, Don Guzman's daughter; and, with pardon for stealing a wedding, she is also my wife.

Don Jer. Gadsbud, and a great fortune! Ferdinand, you are a prudent young rogue, and I forgive you: and, ifecks, you are a pretty little damsel. Give your father-in-law a kiss, you smiling rogue!

Don. Clara. There, old gentleman; and now mind you behave well to us.

Don Jer. Ifecks, those lips ha'n't been chilled by kissing beads! Egad, I believe I shall grow the best-humoured fellow in Spain. Lewis! Sancho! Carlos! d'ye hear? are all my doors thrown open? Our children's weddings are the only holidays our age can boast; and then we drain, with pleasure, the little stock of spirits time has left us.—[*Music within.*] But see, here come our friends and neighbours!

Enter MASQUERADERS.

And, i'faith, we'll make a night on't, with wine, and dance, and catches—then old and young shall join us.

FINALE.

Don Jer. Come now for jest and smiling,
Both old and young beguiling,
Let us laugh and play, so blithe and gay,
Till we banish care away.

Don. Louisa. . Thus crown'd with dance and song,
The hours shall glide along,
With a heart at ease, merry, merry glees
Can never fail to please.

Don Ferd. . Each bride with blushes glowing,
Our wine as rosy flowing,
Let us laugh and play, so blithe and gay,
Till we banish care away.

Don Ant. . . Then healths to every friend
The night's repast shall end,
With a heart at ease, merry, merry glees
Can never fail to please.

Don. Clara. . Nor, while we are so joyous,
Shall anxious fear annoy us;
Let us laugh and play, so blithe and gay,
Till we banish care away.

Don Jer. . . For generous guests like these
Accept the wish to please,
So we'll laugh and play, so blithe and gay,
Your smiles drive care away [*Exeunt omnes.*

THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL.

A COMEDY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AS ORIGINALLY ACTED AT DRURY-LANE THEATRE IN 1777.

SIR PETER TEAZLE	*Mr. King.*	CRABTREE	*Mr. Parsons.*
SIR OLIVER SURFACE	*Mr. Yates.*	ROWLEY	*Mr. Aickin.*
SIR HARRY BUMPER.	*Mr. Gawdry.*	MOSES	*Mr. Baddeley.*
SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE	*Mr. Dodd.*	TRIP	*Mr. Lamash.*
		LADY TEAZLE	*Mrs. Abington.*
JOSEPH SURFACE	*Mr. Palmer.*	LADY SNEERWELL	*Miss Sherry.*
CHARLES SURFACE	*Mr. Smith.*	MRS. CANDOUR	*Miss Pope.*
CARELESS	*Mr. Farren.*	MARIA	*Miss P. Hopkins.*
SNAKE	*Mr. Packer.*	Gentlemen, Maid, *and* Servants.	

SCENE.—LONDON.

A PORTRAIT;

ADDRESSED TO MRS. CREWE, WITH THE COMEDY OF THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL.

BY R. B. SHERIDAN, ESQ.

TELL me, ye prim adepts in Scandal's school,
Who rail by precept, and detract by rule,
Lives there no character, so tried, so known,
So deck'd with grace, and so unlike your own,
That even you assist her fame to raise,
Approve by envy, and by silence praise!
Attend!—a model shall attract your view—
Daughters of calumny, I summon you!
You shall decide if this a portrait prove,
Or fond creation of the Muse and Love.
Attend, ye virgin critics, shrewd and sage,
Ye matron censors of this childish age,
Whose peering eye and wrinkled front declare
A fix'd antipathy to young and fair;
By cunning, cautious; or by nature, cold,
In maiden madness, virulently bold;—
Attend, ye skill'd to coin the precious tale,
Creating proof, where innuendos fail!
Whose practised memories, cruelly exact,
Omit no circumstance, except the fact!—

Attend, all ye who boast,—or old or young,—
The living libel of a slanderous tongue!
So shall my theme as far contrasted be,
As saints by fiends, or hymns by calumny.
Come, gentle Amoret (for 'neath that name
In worthier verse is sung thy beauty's fame);
Come—for but thee who seeks the Muse? and while
Celestial blushes check thy conscious smile,
With timid grace, and hesitating eye,
The perfect model, which I boast, supply:—
Vain Muse! couldst thou the humblest sketch create
Of her, or slightest charm couldst imitate—
Could thy blest strain in kindred colours trace
The faintest wonder of her form and face—
Poets would study the immortal line,
And Reynolds own his art subdued by thine;
That art, which well might added lustre give
To Nature's best, and Heaven's superlative:
On Granby's cheek might bid new glories rise,
Or point a purer beam from Devon's eyes!
Hard is the task to shape that beauty's praise,
Whose judgment scorns the homage flattery pays?
But praising Amoret we cannot err,
No tongue o'ervalues Heaven, or flatters her!
Yet she by fate's perverseness—she alone
Would doubt our truth, nor deem such praise her own!
Adorning fashion, unadorn'd by dress,
Simple from taste, and not from carelessness;
Discreet in gesture, in deportment mild,
Not stiff with prudence, nor uncouthly wild:
No state has Amoret; no studied mien;
She frowns no goddess, and she moves no queen.
The softer charm that in her manner lies
Is framed to captivate, yet not surprise;
It justly suits the expression of her face,—
'Tis less than dignity, and more than grace!
On her pure cheek the native hue is such,
That, form'd by Heaven to be admired so much,
The hand divine, with a less partial care,
Might well have fix'd a fainter crimson there,
And bade the gentle inmate of her breast—
Inshrined Modesty—supply the rest.
But who the peril of her lips shall paint?
Strip them of smiles—still, still all words are faint.

But moving Love himself appears to teach
Their action, though denied to rule her speech;
And thou who seest her speak, and dost not hear,
Mourn not her distant accents 'scape thine ear;
Viewing those lips, thou still may'st make pretence
To judge of what she says, and swear 'tis sense:
Clothed with such grace, with such expression fraught,
They move in meaning, and they pause in thought!
But dost thou farther watch, with charm'd surprise,
The mild irresolution of her eyes,
Curious to mark how frequent they repose,
In brief eclipse and momentary close—
Ah! seest thou not an ambush'd Cupid there,
Too tim'rous of his charge, with jealous care
Veils and unveils those beams of heavenly light,
Too full, too fatal else, for mortal sight?
Nor yet, such pleasing vengeance fond to meet,
In pard'ning dimples hope a safe retreat.
What though her peaceful breast should ne'er allow
Subduing frowns to arm her alter'd brow,
By Love, I swear, and by his gentle wiles,
More fatal still the mercy of her smiles!
Thus lovely, thus adorn'd, possessing all
Of bright or fair that can to woman fall,
The height of vanity might well be thought
Prerogative in her, and Nature's fault.
Yet gentle Amoret, in mind supreme
As well as charms, rejects the vainer theme;
And, half mistrustful of her beauty's store,
She barbs with wit those darts too keen before:—
Read in all knowledge that her sex should reach,
Though Greville, or the Muse, should deign to teach,
Fond to improve, nor timorous to discern
How far it is a woman's grace to learn;
In Millar's dialect she would not prove
Apollo's priestess, but Apollo's love,
Graced by those signs which truth delights to own,
The timid blush, and mild submitted tone:
Whate'er she says, though sense appear throughout,
Displays the tender hue of female doubt;
Deck'd with that charm, how lovely wit appears,
How graceful science, when that robe she wears!
Such too her talents, and her bent of mind,
As speak a sprightly heart by thought refined:

A taste for mirth, by contemplation school'd,
A turn for ridicule, by candour ruled,
A scorn of folly, which she tries to hide;
An awe of talent, which she owns with pride!
Peace, idle Muse! no more thy strain prolong,
But yield a theme, thy warmest praises wrong;
Just to her merit, though thou canst not raise
Thy feeble verse, behold th' acknowledged praise
Has spread conviction through the envious train,
And cast a fatal gloom o'er Scandal's reign!
And lo! each pallid hag, with blister'd tongue,
Mutters assent to all thy zeal has sung—
Owns all the colours just—the outline true;
Thee my inspirer, and my model—CREWE!

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR. GARRICK.

A SCHOOL for Scandal! tell me, I beseech you,
Needs there a school this modish art to teach you?
No need of lessons now, the knowing think;
We might as well be taught to eat and drink.
Caused by a dearth of scandal, should the vapours
Distress our fair ones—let them read the papers;
Their powerful mixtures such disorders hit;
Crave what you will—there's *quantum sufficit.*
"Lord!" cries my Lady Wormwood (who loves tattle,
And puts much salt and pepper in her prattle),
Just risen at noon, all night at cards when threshing
Strong tea and scandal—"Bless me, how refreshing!
Give me the papers, Lisp—how bold and free! [*Sips.*
Last night Lord L. [*Sips*] *was caught with Lady D.*
For aching heads what charming sal volatile! [*Sips.*
If Mrs. B. will still continue flirting,
We hope she'll DRAW, *or we'll* UNDRAW *the curtain.*
Fine satire, poz—in public all abuse it,
But, by ourselves [*Sips*], our praise we can't refuse it.
Now, Lisp, read you—there, at that dash and star."
"Yes, ma'am—*A certain lord had best beware,*
Who lives not twenty miles from Grosvenor Square;
For should he Lady W. find willing,
Wormwood is bitter"——"Oh! that's me! the villain!
Throw it behind the fire, and never more
Let that vile paper come within my door."

Thus at our friends we laugh, who feel the dart;
To reach our feelings, we ourselves must smart.
Is our young bard so young, to think that he
Can stop the full spring-tide of calumny?
Knows he the world so little, and its trade?
Alas! the devil's sooner raised than laid.
So strong, so swift, the monster there's no gagging:
Cut Scandal's head off, still the tongue is wagging.
Proud of your smiles once lavishly bestow'd,
Again our young Don Quixote takes the road;
To show his gratitude he draws his pen,
And seeks his hydra, Scandal, in his den.
For your applause all perils he would through—
He'll fight—that's write—a cavalliero true,
Till every drop of blood—that's ink—is spilt for you.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—LADY SNEERWELL'S *Dressing-room.*

LADY SNEERWELL *discovered at her toilet;* SNAKE *drinking chocolate.*

Lady Sneer. The paragraphs, you say, Mr. Snake, were all inserted?

Snake. They were, madam; and, as I copied them myself in a feigned hand, there can be no suspicion whence they came.

Lady Sneer. Did you circulate the report of Lady Brittle's intrigue with Captain Boastall?

Snake. That's in as fine a train as your ladyship could wish. In the common course of things, I think it must reach Mrs. Clackitt's ears within four-and-twenty hours; and then, you know, the business is as good as done.

Lady Sneer. Why, truly, Mrs. Clackitt has a very pretty talent, and a great deal of industry.

Snake. True, madam, and has been tolerably successful in her day. To my knowledge, she has been the cause of six matches being broken off, and three sons being disinherited; of four forced elopements, and as many close confinements; nine separate maintenances, and two divorces. Nay, I have more than once traced her causing a *tête-à-tête* in the "Town and Country Magazine," when the parties, perhaps, had never seen each other's face before in the course of their lives.

Lady Sneer. She certainly has talents, but her manner is gross.

Snake. 'Tis very true. She generally designs well, has a free

tongue and a bold invention; but her colouring is too dark, and her outlines often extravagant. She wants that delicacy of tint, and mellowness of sneer, which distinguish your ladyship's scandal.

Lady Sneer. You are partial, Snake.

Snake. Not in the least; everybody allows that Lady Sneerwell can do more with a word or look than many can with the most laboured detail, even when they happen to have a little truth on their side to support it.

Lady Sneer. Yes, my dear Snake; and I am no hypocrite to deny the satisfaction I reap from the success of my efforts. Wounded myself, in the early part of my life, by the envenomed tongue of slander, I confess I have since known no pleasure equal to the reducing others to the level of my own reputation.

Snake. Nothing can be more natural. But, Lady Sneerwell, there is one affair in which you have lately employed me, wherein, I confess, I am at a loss to guess your motives.

Lady Sneer. I conceive you mean with respect to my neighbour, Sir Peter Teazle, and his family?

Snake. I do. Here are two young men, to whom Sir Peter has acted as a kind of guardian since their father's death; the eldest possessing the most amiable character, and universally well spoken of—the youngest, the most dissipated and extravagant young fellow in the kingdom, without friends or character: the former an avowed admirer of your ladyship, and apparently your favourite; the latter attached to Maria, Sir Peter's ward, and confessedly beloved by her. Now, on the face of these circumstances, it is utterly unaccountable to me, why you, the widow of a city knight, with a good jointure, should not close with the passion of a man of such character and expectations as Mr. Surface; and more so why you should be so uncommonly earnest to destroy the mutual attachment subsisting between his brother Charles and Maria.

Lady Sneer. Then, at once to unravel this mystery, I must inform you that love has no share whatever in the intercour e between Mr. Surface and me.

Snake. No!

Lady Sneer. His real attachment is to Maria, or her fortune; but, finding in his brother a favoured rival, he has been obliged to mask his pretensions, and profit by my assistance.

Snake. Yet still I am more puzzled why you should interest yourself in his success.

Lady Sneer. Heavens! how dull you are! Cannot you surmise the weakness which I hitherto, through shame, have con-

cealed even from you? Must I confess that Charles—that libertine, that extravagant, that bankrupt in fortune and reputation—that he it is for whom I am thus anxious and malicious, and to gain whom I would sacrifice everything?

Snake. Now, indeed, your conduct appears consistent: but how came you and Mr. Surface so confidential?

Lady Sneer. For our mutual interest. I have found him out a long time since. I know him to be artful, selfish, and malicious—in short, a sentimental knave; while with Sir Peter, and indeed with all his acquaintance, he passes for a youthful miracle of prudence, good sense, and benevolence.

Snake. Yes; yet Sir Peter vows he has not his equal in England; and, above all, he praises him as a man of sentiment.

Lady Sneer. True; and with the assistance of his sentiment and hypocrisy he has brought Sir Peter entirely into his interest with regard to Maria; while poor Charles has no friend in the house—though, I fear, he has a powerful one in Maria's heart, against whom we must direct our schemes.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Mr. Surface.

Lady Sneer. Show him up.—[*Exit* SERVANT.] He generally calls about this time. I don't wonder at people giving him to me for a lover.

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE.

Jos. Surf. My dear Lady Sneerwell, how do you do to-day? Mr. Snake, your most obedient.

Lady Sneer. Snake has just been rallying me on our mutual attachment; but I have informed him of our real views. You know how useful he has been to us; and, believe me, the confidence is not ill-placed.

Jos. Surf. Madam, it is impossible for me to suspect a man of Mr. Snake's sensibility and discernment.

Lady Sneer. Well, well, no compliments now; but tell me when you saw your mistress, Maria—or, what is more material to me, your brother.

Jos. Surf. I have not seen either since I left you; but I can inform you that they never meet. Some of your stories have taken a good effect on Maria.

Lady Sneer. Ah, my dear Snake! the merit of this belongs to you. But do your brother's distresses increase?

Jos. Surf. Every hour. I am told he has had another execution in the house yesterday. In short, his dissipation and extravagance exceed anything I have ever heard of.

Lady Sneer. Poor Charles!

Jos. Surf. True, madam; notwithstanding his vices, one can't help feeling for him. Poor Charles! I'm sure I wish it were in my power to be of any essential service to him; for the man who does not share in the distresses of a brother, even though merited by his own misconduct, deserves——

Lady Sneer. O Lud! you are going to be moral, and forget that you are among friends.

Jos. Surf. Egad, that's true! I'll keep that sentiment till I see Sir Peter. However, it is certainly a charity to rescue Maria from such a libertine, who, if he is to be reclaimed, can be so only by a person of your ladyship's superior accomplishments and understanding.

Snake. I believe, Lady Sneerwell, here's company coming: I'll go and copy the letter I mentioned to you. Mr. Surface, your most obedient.

Jos. Surf. Sir, your very devoted.—[*Exit* SNAKE.] Lady Sneerwell, I am very sorry you have put any farther confidence in that fellow.

Lady Sneer. Why so?

Jos. Surf. I have lately detected him in frequent conference with old Rowley, who was formerly my father's steward, and has never, you know, been a friend of mine.

Lady Sneer. And do you think he would betray us?

Jos. Surf. Nothing more likely: take my word for't, Lady Sneerwell, that fellow hasn't virtue enough to be faithful even to his own villany. Ah, Maria!

Enter MARIA.

Lady Sneer. Maria, my dear, how do you do? What's the matter?

Mar. Oh! there's that disagreeable lover of mine, Sir Benjamin Backbite, has just called at my guardian's, with his odious uncle, Crabtree; so I slipped out, and ran hither to avoid them.

Lady Sneer. Is that all?

Jos. Surf. If my brother Charles had been of the party, madam, perhaps you would not have been so much alarmed.

Lady Sneer. Nay, now you are severe; for I dare swear the truth of the matter is, Maria heard you were here. But, my dear, what has Sir Benjamin done, that you should avoid him so?

Mar. Oh, he has done nothing—but 'tis for what he has said: his conversation is a perpetual libel on all his acquaintance.

Jos. Surf. Ay, and the worst of it is, there is no advantage

in not knowing him; for he'll abuse a stranger just as soon as his best friend: and his uncle's as bad.

Lady Sneer. Nay, but we should make allowance; Sir Benjamin is a wit and a poet.

Mar. For my part, I own, madam, wit loses its respect with me, when I see it in company with malice. What do you think, Mr. Surface?

Jos. Surf. Certainly, madam; to smile at the jest which plants a thorn in another's breast is to become a principal in the mischief.

Lady Sneer. Psha! there's no possibility of being witty without a little ill-nature: the malice of a good thing is the barb that makes it stick. What's your opinion, Mr. Surface?

Jos. Surf. To be sure, madam; that conversation, where the spirit of raillery is suppressed, will ever appear tedious and insipid.

Mar. Well, I'll not debate how far scandal may be allowable; but in a man, I am sure, it is always contemptible. We have pride, envy, rivalship, and a thousand motives to depreciate each other; but the male slanderer must have the cowardice of a woman before he can traduce one.

Re-enter SERVANT.

Ser. Madam, Mrs. Candour is below, and, if your ladyship's at leisure, will leave her carriage.

Lady Sneer. Beg her to walk in.—[*Exit* SERVANT.] Now, Maria, here is a character to your taste; for, though Mrs. Candour is a little talkative, everybody allows her to be the best-natured and best sort of woman.

Mar. Yes, with a very gross affectation of good nature and benevolence, she does more mischief than the direct malice of old Crabtree.

Jos. Surf. I'faith that's true, Lady Sneerwell: whenever I hear the current running against the characters of my friends, I never think them in such danger as when Candour undertakes their defence.

Lady Sneer. Hush!—here she is!

Enter MRS. CANDOUR.

Mrs. Can. My dear Lady Sneerwell, how have you been this century?—Mr. Surface, what news do you hear?—though indeed it is no matter, for I think one hears nothing else but scandal.

Jos. Surf. Just so, indeed, ma'am.

Mrs. Can. Oh, Maria! child,—what, is the whole affair off between you and Charles? His extravagance, I presume—the town talks of nothing else.

Mar. I am very sorry, ma'am, the town has so little to do.

Mrs. Can. True, true, child: but there's no stopping people's tongues. I own I was hurt to hear it, as I indeed was to learn, from the same quarter, that your guardian, Sir Peter, and Lady Teazle have not agreed lately as well as could be wished.

Mar. 'Tis strangely impertinent for people to busy themselves so.

Mrs. Can. Very true, child: but what's to be done? People will talk—there's no preventing it. Why, it was but yesterday I was told that Miss Gadabout had eloped with Sir Filagree Flirt. But, Lord! there's no minding what one hears; though, to be sure, I had this from very good authority.

Mar. Such reports are highly scandalous.

Mrs. Can. So they are, child—shameful, shameful! But the world is so censorious, no character escapes. Lord, now who would have suspected your friend, Miss Prim, of an indiscretion? Yet such is the ill-nature of people, that they say her uncle stopped her last week, just as she was stepping into the York mail with her dancing-master.

Mar. I'll answer for't there are no grounds for that report.

Mrs. Can. Ah, no foundation in the world, I dare swear: no more, probably, than for the story circulated last month, of Mrs. Festino's affair with Colonel Cassino—though, to be sure, that matter was never rightly cleared up.

Jos. Surf. The licence of invention some people take is monstrous indeed.

Mar. 'Tis so; but, in my opinion, those who report such things are equally culpable.

Mrs. Can. To be sure they are; tale-bearers are as bad as the tale-makers—'tis an old observation, and a very true one: but what's to be done, as I said before? how will you prevent people from talking? To-day, Mrs. Clackitt assured me, Mr. and Mrs. Honeymoon were at last become mere man and wife, like the rest of their acquaintance. She likewise hinted that a certain widow, in the next street, had got rid of her dropsy and recovered her shape in a most surprising manner. And at the same time Miss Tattle, who was by, affirmed, that Lord Buffalo had discovered his lady at a house of no extraordinary fame; and that Sir Harry Bouquet and Tom Saunter were to measure swords on a similar provocation. But, Lord, do you think I would report these things! No, no! tale-bearers, as I said before, are just as bad as the tale-makers.

Jos. Surf. Ah! Mrs. Candour, if everybody had your forbearance and good nature!

Mrs. Can. I confess, Mr. Surface, I cannot bear to hear people attacked behind their backs; and when ugly circumstances come out against our acquaintance I own I always love to think the best. By-the-by, I hope 'tis not true that your brother is absolutely ruined?

Jos. Surf. I am afraid his circumstances are very bad indeed, ma'am.

Mrs. Can. Ah! I heard so—but you must tell him to keep up his spirits; everybody almost is in the same way: Lord Spindle, Sir Thomas Splint, Captain Quinze, and Mr. Nickit—all up, I hear, within this week; so, if Charles is undone, he'll find half his acquaintance ruined too, and that, you know, is a consolation.

Jos. Surf. Doubtless, ma'am—a very great one.

Re-enter SERVANT.

Ser. Mr. Crabtree and Sir Benjamin Backbite. [*Exit.*

Lady Sneer. So, Maria, you see your lover pursues you; positively you shan't escape.

Enter CRABTREE *and* SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE.

Crab. Lady Sneerwell, I kiss your hand. Mrs. Candour, I don't believe you are acquainted with my nephew, Sir Benjamin Backbite? Egad, ma'am, he has a pretty wit, and is a pretty poet too. Isn't he, Lady Sneerwell?

Sir Ben. Oh, fie, uncle!

Crab. Nay, egad it's true; I back him at a rebus or a charade against the best rhymer in the kingdom. Has your ladyship heard the epigram he wrote last week on Lady Frizzle's feather catching fire?—Do, Benjamin, repeat it, or the charade you made last night extempore at Mrs. Drowzie's conversazione. Come now; your first is the name of a fish, your second a great naval commander, and——

Sir Ben. Uncle, now—pr'ythee——

Crab. I'faith, ma'am, 'twould surprise you to hear how ready he is at all these sort of things.

Lady Sneer. I wonder, Sir Benjamin, you never publish anything.

Sir Ben. To say truth, ma'am, 'tis very vulgar to print; and, as my little productions are mostly satires and lampoons on particular people, I find they circulate more by giving copies in confidence to the friends of the parties. However, I have some love elegies, which, when favoured with this lady's smiles, I mean to give the public. [*Pointing to* MARIA.

Crab. [*To* MARIA.] 'Fore heaven, ma'am, they'll immortalize you!—you will be handed down to posterity, like Petrarch's Laura, or Waller's Sacharissa.

Sir Ben. [*To* MARIA.] Yes, madam, I think you will like them, when you shall see them on a beautiful quarto page, where a neat rivulet of text shall meander through a meadow of margin. 'Fore Gad, they will be the most elegant things of their kind!

Crab. But, ladies, that's true—have you heard the news?

Mrs. Can. What, sir, do you mean the report of——

Crab. No, ma'am, that's not it.—Miss Nicely is going to be married to her own footman.

Mrs. Can. Impossible!

Crab. Ask Sir Benjamin.

Sir Ben. 'Tis very true, ma'am: everything is fixed, and the wedding liveries bespoke.

Crab. Yes—and they do say there were pressing reasons for it.

Lady Sneer. Why, I have heard something of this before.

Mrs. Can. It can't be—and I wonder any one should believe such a story of so prudent a lady as Miss Nicely.

Sir Ben. O Lud! ma'am, that's the very reason 'twas believed at once. She has always been so cautious and so reserved, that everybody was sure there was some reason for it at bottom.

Mrs. Can. Why, to be sure, a tale of scandal is as fatal to the credit of a prudent lady of her stamp as a fever is generally to those of the strongest constitutions. But there is a sort of puny sickly reputation, that is always ailing, yet will outlive the robuster characters of a hundred prudes.

Sir Ben. True, madam, there are valetudinarians in reputation as well as constitution, who, being conscious of their weak part, avoid the least breath of air, and supply their want of stamina by care and circumspection.

Mrs. Can. Well, but this may be all a mistake. You know, Sir Benjamin, very trifling circumstances often give rise to the most injurious tales.

Crab. That they do, I'll be sworn, ma'am. Did you ever hear how Miss Piper came to lose her lover and her character last summer at Tunbridge?—Sir Benjamin, you remember it?

Sir Ben. Oh, to be sure!—the most whimsical circumstance.

Lady Sneer. How was it, pray?

Crab. Why, one evening, at Mrs. Ponto's assembly, the conversation happened to turn on the breeding Nova Scotia sheep

in this country. Says a young lady in company, I have known instances of it; for Miss Letitia Piper, a first cousin of mine, had a Nova Scotia sheep that produced her twins. "What!" cries the Lady Dowager Dundizzy (who you know is as deaf as a post), "has Miss Piper had twins?" This mistake, as you may imagine, threw the whole company into a fit of laughter. However, 'twas the next morning everywhere reported, and in a few days believed by the whole town, that Miss Letitia Piper had actually been brought to bed of a fine boy and a girl: and in less than a week there were some people who could name the father, and the farm-house where the babies were put to nurse.

Lady Sneer. Strange, indeed!

Crab. Matter of fact, I assure you. O Lud! Mr. Surface, pray is it true that your uncle, Sir Oliver, is coming home?

Jos. Surf. Not that I know of, indeed, sir.

Crab. He has been in the East Indies a long time. You can scarcely remember him, I believe? Sad comfort, whenever he returns, to hear how your brother has gone on!

Jos. Surf. Charles has been imprudent, sir, to be sure; but I hope no busy people have already prejudiced Sir Oliver against him. He may reform.

Sir Ben. To be sure he may: for my part, I never believed him to be so utterly void of principle as people say; and, though he has lost all his friends, I am told nobody is better spoken of by the Jews.

Crab. That's true, egad, nephew. If the Old Jewry was a ward, I believe Charles would be an alderman: no man more popular there, 'fore Gad! I hear he pays as many annuities as the Irish tontine; and that, whenever he is sick, they have prayers for the recovery of his health in all the synagogues.

Sir Ben. Yet no man lives in greater splendour. They tell me, when he entertains his friends he will sit down to dinner with a dozen of his own securities; have a score of tradesmen waiting in the antechamber, and an officer behind every guest's chair.

Jos. Surf. This may be entertainment to you, gentlemen, but you pay very little regard to the feelings of a brother.

Mar. [*Aside.*] Their malice is intolerable!—[*Aloud.*] Lady Sneerwell, I must wish you a good morning: I'm not very well. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Can. O dear! she changes colour very much.

Lady Sneer. Do, Mrs. Candour, follow her: she may want your assistance.

Mrs. Can. That I will, with all my soul, ma'am.—Poor dear girl, who knows what her situation may be! [*Exit.*

Lady Sneer. 'Twas nothing but that she could not bear to hear Charles reflected on, notwithstanding their difference.

Sir Ben. The young lady's *penchant* is obvious.

Crab. But, Benjamin, you must not give up the pursuit for that: follow her, and put her into good humour. Repeat her some of your own verses. Come, I'll assist you.

Sir Ben. Mr. Surface, I did not mean to hurt you; but depend on't your brother is utterly undone.

Crab. O Lud, ay! undone as ever man was—can't raise a guinea!

Sir Ben. And everything sold, I'm told, that was movable.

Crab. I have seen one that was at his house. Not a thing left but some empty bottles that were overlooked, and the family pictures, which I believe are framed in the wainscots.

Sir Ben. And I'm very sorry also to hear some bad stories against him. [*Going.*

Crab. Oh; he has done many mean things, that's certain.

Sir Ben. But, however, as he's your brother—— [*Going.*

Crab. We'll tell you all another opportunity.

[*Exeunt* CRABTREE *and* SIR BENJAMIN.

Lady Sneer. Ha! ha! 'tis very hard for them to leave a subject they have not quite run down.

Jos. Surf. And I believe the abuse was no more acceptable to your ladyship than Maria.

Lady Sneer. I doubt her affections are further engaged than we imagine. But the family are to be here this evening, so you may as well dine where you are, and we shall have an opportunity of observing further; in the meantime, I'll go and plot mischief, and you shall study sentiment. [*Exeunt*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* SIR PETER TEAZLE'S *House.*

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE.

Sir Pet. When an old bachelor marries a young wife, what is he to expect? 'Tis now six months since Lady Teazle made me the happiest of men—and I have been the most miserable dog ever since! We tift a little going to church, and fairly quarrelled before the bells had done ringing. I was more than once nearly choked with gall during the honeymoon, and had lost all comfort in life before my friends had done wishing me joy. Yet I chose with caution—a girl bred wholly in the country, who never knew luxury beyond one silk gown, nor

dissipation above the annual gala of a race ball. Yet she now plays her part in all the extravagant fopperies of fashion and the town, with as ready a grace as if she never had seen a bush or a grass-plot out of Grosvenor Square! I am sneered at by all my acquaintance, and paragraphed in the newspapers. She dissipates my fortune, and contradicts all my humours; yet the worst of it is, I doubt I love her, or I should never bear all this. However, I'll never be weak enough to own it.

Enter ROWLEY.

Row. Oh! Sir Peter, your servant: how is it with you, sir?

Sir Pet. Very bad, Master Rowley, very bad. I meet with nothing but crosses and vexations.

Row. What can have happened since yesterday?

Sir Pet. A good question to a married man!

Row. Nay, I'm sure, Sir Peter, your lady can't be the cause of your uneasiness.

Sir Pet. Why, has anybody told you she was dead?

Row. Come, come, Sir Peter, you love her, notwithstanding your tempers don't exactly agree.

Sir Pet. But the fault is entirely hers, Master Rowley. I am, myself, the sweetest-tempered man alive, and hate a teasing temper; and so I tell her a hundred times a day.

Row. Indeed!

Sir Pet. Ay; and what is very extraordinary, in all our disputes she is always in the wrong! But Lady Sneerwell, and the set she meets at her house, encourage the perverseness of her disposition. Then, to complete my vexation, Maria, my ward, whom I ought to have the power of a father over, is determined to turn rebel too, and absolutely refuses the man whom I have long resolved on for her husband; meaning, I suppose, to bestow herself on his profligate brother.

Row. You know, Sir Peter, I have always taken the liberty to differ with you on the subject of these two young gentlemen. I only wish you may not be deceived in your opinion of the elder. For Charles, my life on't! he will retrieve his errors yet. Their worthy father, once my honoured master, was, at his years, nearly as wild a spark; yet, when he died, he did not leave a more benevolent heart to lament his loss.

Sir Pet. You are wrong, Master Rowley. On their father's death, you know, I acted as a kind of guardian to them both, till their uncle Sir Oliver's liberality gave them an early independence: of course, no person could have more opportunities of judging of their hearts, and I was never mistaken in my life.

Joseph is indeed a model for the young men of the age. He is a man of sentiment, and acts up to the sentiments he professes; but, for the other, take my word for't, if he had any grain of virtue by descent, he has dissipated it with the rest of his inheritance. Ah! my old friend, Sir Oliver, will be deeply mortified when he finds how part of his bounty has been misapplied.

Row. I am sorry to find you so violent against the young man, because this may be the most critical period of his fortune. I came hither with news that will surprise you.

Sir Pet. What! let me hear.

Row. Sir Oliver is arrived, and at this moment in town.

Sir Pet. How! you astonish me! I thought you did not expect him this month.

Row. I did not: but his passage has been remarkably quick.

Sir Pet. Egad, I shall rejoice to see my old friend. 'Tis sixteen years since we met. We have had many a day together: —but does he still enjoin us not to inform his nephews of his arrival?

Row. Most strictly. He means, before it is known, to make some trial of their dispositions.

Sir Pet. Ah! there needs no art to discover their merits— however he shall have his way; but, pray, does he know I am married?

Row. Yes, and will soon wish you joy.

Sir Pet. What, as we drink health to a friend in a consumption! Ah! Oliver will laugh at me. We used to rail at matrimony together, but he has been steady to his text. Well, he must be soon at my house, though—I'll instantly give orders for his reception. But, Master Rowley, don't drop a word that Lady Teazle and I ever disagree.

Row. By no means.

Sir Pet. For I should never be able to stand Noll's jokes; so I'll have him think, Lord forgive me! that we are a very happy couple.

Row. I understand you:—but then you must be very careful not to differ while he is in the house with you.

Sir Pet. Egad, and so we must—and that's impossible. Ah! Master Rowley, when an old bachelor marries a young wife, he deserves—no—the crime carries its punishment along with it.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Room in* SIR PETER TEAZLE'S *House.*

Enter SIR PETER *and* LADY TEAZLE.

Sir Pet. Lady Teazle, Lady Teazle, I'll not bear it!

Lady Teaz. Sir Peter, Sir Peter, you may bear it or not, as you please; but I ought to have my own way in everything, and, what's more, I will too. What though I was educated in the country, I know very well that women of fashion in London are accountable to nobody after they are married.

Sir Pet. Very well, ma'am, very well; so a husband is to have no influence, no authority?

Lady Teaz. Authority! No, to be sure:—if you wanted authority over me, you should have adopted me, and not married me: I am sure you were old enough.

Sir Pet. Old enough!—ay, there it is. Well, well, Lady Teazle, though my life may be made unhappy by your temper, I'll not be ruined by your extravagance!

Lady Teaz. My extravagance! I'm sure I'm not more extravagant than a woman of fashion ought to be.

Sir Pet. No, no, madam, you shall throw away no more sums on such unmeaning luxury. 'Slife! to spend as much to furnish your dressing-room with flowers in winter as would suffice to turn the Pantheon into a greenhouse, and give a *fête champêtre* at Christmas.

Lady Teaz. And am I to blame, Sir Peter, because flowers are dear in cold weather? You should find fault with the climate, and not with me. For my part, I'm sure I wish it was spring all the year round, and that roses grew under our feet!

Sir Pet. Oons! madam—if you had been born to this, I shouldn't wonder at your talking thus; but you forget what your situation was when I married you.

Lady Teaz. No, no, I don't; 'twas a very disagreeable one, or I should never have married you.

Sir Pet. Yes, yes, madam, you were then in somewhat a humbler style—the daughter of a plain country squire. Recollect, Lady Teazle, when I saw you first sitting at your tambour, in a pretty figured linen gown, with a bunch of keys at your side, your hair combed smooth over a roll, and your apartment hung round with fruits in worsted, of your own working.

Lady Teaz. Oh, yes! I remember it very well, and a curious life I led. My daily occupation to inspect the dairy, superintend the poultry, make extracts from the family receipt-book, and comb my aunt Deborah's lapdog

Sir Pet. Yes, yes, ma'am, 'twas so indeed.

Lady Teaz. And then, you know, my evening amusements! To draw patterns for ruffles, which I had not materials to make up; to play Pope Joan with the curate; to read a sermon to my aunt; or to be stuck down to an old spinnet to strum my father to sleep after a fox-chase.

Sir Pet. I am glad you have so good a memory. Yes, madam, these were the recreations I took you from; but now you must have your coach—*vis-à-vis*—and three powdered footmen before your chair; and, in the summer, a pair of white cats to draw you to Kensington Gardens. No recollection, I suppose, when you were content to ride double, behind the butler, on a docked coach-horse?

Lady Teaz. No—I swear I never did that: I deny the butler and the coach-horse.

Sir Pet. This, madam, was your situation; and what have I done for you? I have made you a woman of fashion, of fortune, of rank—in short, I have made you my wife.

Lady Teaz. Well, then, and there is but one thing more you can make me to add to the obligation, that is——

Sir Pet. My widow, I suppose?

Lady Teaz. Hem! hem!

Sir Pet. I thank you, madam—but don't flatter yourself; for, though your ill-conduct may disturb my peace of mind, it shall never break my heart, I promise you: however, I am equally obliged to you for the hint.

Lady Teaz. Then why will you endeavour to make yourself so disagreeable to me, and thwart me in every little elegant expense?

Sir Pet. 'Slife, madam, I say, had you any of these little elegant expenses when you married me?

Lady Teaz. Lud, Sir Peter! would you have me be out of the fashion?

Sir Pet. The fashion, indeed! what had you to do with the fashion before you married me?

Lady Teaz. For my part, I should think you would like to have your wife thought a woman of taste.

Sir Pet. Ay—there again—taste! Zounds! madam, you had no taste when you married me!

Lady Teaz. That's very true, indeed, Sir Peter! and, after having married you, I should never pretend to taste again, I allow. But now, Sir Peter, since we have finished our daily jangle, I presume I may go to my engagement at Lady Sneerwell's?

Sir Pet. Ay, there's another precious circumstance—a charming set of acquaintance you have made there!

Lady Teaz. Nay, Sir Peter, they are all people of rank and fortune, and remarkably tenacious of reputation.

Sir Pet. Yes, egad, they are tenacious of reputation with a vengeance; for they don't choose anybody should have a character but themselves! Such a crew! Ah! many a wretch has rid on a hurdle who has done less mischief than these utterers of forged tales, coiners of scandal, and clippers of reputation.

Lady Teaz. What, would you restrain the freedom of speech?

Sir Pet. Ah! they have made you just as bad as any one of the society.

Lady Teaz. Why, I believe I do bear a part with a tolerable grace.

Sir Pet. Grace, indeed!

Lady Teaz. But I vow I bear no malice against the people I abuse: when I say an ill-natured thing, 'tis out of pure good humour; and I take it for granted they deal exactly in the same manner with me. But, Sir Peter, you know you promised to come to Lady Sneerwell's too.

Sir Pet. Well, well, I'll call in, just to look after my own character.

Lady Teaz. Then, indeed, you must make haste after me, or you'll be too late. So good-bye to ye. [*Exit.*

Sir Pet. So—I have gained much by my intended expostulation! Yet with what a charming air she contradicts everything I say, and how pleasantly she shows her contempt for my authority! Well, though I can't make her love me, there is great satisfaction in quarrelling with her; and I think she never appears to such advantage as when she is doing everything in her power to plague me. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* LADY SNEERWELL'S *House.*

LADY SNEERWELL, MRS. CANDOUR, CRABTREE, SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE, *and* JOSEPH SURFACE, *discovered.*

Lady Sneer. Nay, positively, we will hear it.

Jos. Surf. Yes, yes, the epigram, by all means.

Sir Ben. O plague on't, uncle! 'tis mere nonsense.

Crab. No, no; 'fore Gad, very clever for an extempore!

Sir Ben. But, ladies, you should be acquainted with the circumstance. You must know, that one day last week, as Lady Betty Curricle was taking the dust in Hyde Park, in a sort of duodecimo phaeton, she desired me to write some verses on

her ponies; upon which, I took out my pocket-book, and in one moment produced the following:—

> Sure never were seen two such beautiful ponies;
> Other horses are clowns, but these macaronies:
> To give them this title I'm sure can't be wrong,
> Their legs are so slim, and their tails are so long.

Crab. There, ladies, done in the smack of a whip, and on horseback too.

Jos. Surf. A very Phœbus, mounted—indeed, Sir Benjamin!

Sir Ben. Oh dear, sir! trifles—trifles.

Enter LADY TEAZLE *and* MARIA.

Mrs. Can. I must have a copy.

Lady Sneer. Lady Teazle, I hope we shall see Sir Peter?

Lady Teaz. I believe he'll wait on your ladyship presently.

Lady Sneer. Maria, my love, you look grave. Come, you shall sit down to piquet with Mr. Surface.

Mar. I take very little pleasure in cards—however, I'll do as your ladyship pleases.

Lady Teaz. I am surprised Mr. Surface should sit down with her; I thought he would have embraced this opportunity of speaking to me before Sir Peter came. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Can. Now, I'll die; but you are so scandalous, I'll forswear your society.

Lady Teaz. What's the matter, Mrs. Candour?

Mrs. Can. They'll not allow our friend Miss Vermilion to be handsome.

Lady Sneer. Oh, surely she is a pretty woman.

Crab. I am very glad you think so, ma'am.

Mrs. Can. She has a charming fresh colour.

Lady Teaz. Yes, when it is fresh put on.

Mrs. Can. Oh, fie! I'll swear her colour is natural: I have seen it come and go!

Lady Teaz. I dare swear you have, ma'am: it goes off at night, and comes again in the morning.

Sir Ben. True, ma'am, it not only comes and goes; but, what's more, egad, her maid can fetch and carry it!

Mrs. Can. Ha! ha! ha! how I hate to hear you talk so! But surely, now, her sister is, or was, very handsome.

Crab. Who? Mrs. Evergreen? O Lord! she's six-and-fifty if she's an hour!

Mrs. Can. Now positively you wrong her; fifty-two or fifty-three is the utmost—and I don't think she looks more.

Sir Ben. Ah! there's no judging by her looks, unless one could see her face.

Lady Sneer. Well, well, if Mrs. Evergreen does take some pains to repair the ravages of time, you must allow she effects it with great ingenuity; and surely that's better than the careless manner in which the widow Ochre caulks her wrinkles.

Sir Ben. Nay, now, Lady Sneerwell, you are severe upon the widow. Come, come, 'tis not that she paints so ill—but, when she has finished her face, she joins it on so badly to her neck, that she looks like a mended statue, in which the connoisseur may see at once that the head is modern, though the trunk's antique!

Crab. Ha! ha! ha! Well said, nephew!

Mrs. Can. Ha! ha! ha! Well, you make me laugh; but I vow I hate you for it. What do you think of Miss Simper?

Sir Ben. Why, she has very pretty teeth.

Lady Teaz. Yes; and on that account, when she is neither speaking nor laughing (which very seldom happens), she never absolutely shuts her mouth, but leaves it always on ajar, as it were—thus. [*Shows her teeth.*

Mrs. Can. How can you be so ill-natured?

Lady Teaz. Nay, I allow even that's better than the pains Mrs. Prim takes to conceal her losses in front. She draws her mouth till it positively resembles the aperture of a poor's-box, and all her words appear to slide out edgewise, as it were—thus: *How do you do, madam? Yes, madam.* [*Mimics.*

Lady Sneer. Very well, Lady Teazle; I see you can be a little severe.

Lady Teaz. In defence of a friend it is but justice. But here comes Sir Peter to spoil our pleasantry.

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE.

Sir Pet. Ladies, your most obedient.—[*Aside.*] Mercy on me, here is the whole set! a character dead at every word, I suppose.

Mrs. Can. I am rejoiced you are come, Sir Peter. They have been so censorious—and Lady Teazle as bad as any one.

Sir Pet. That must be very distressing to you, indeed, Mrs. Candour.

Mrs. Can. Oh, they will allow good qualities to nobody; not even good nature to our friend Mrs. Pursy.

Lady Teaz. What, the fat dowager who was at Mrs. Quadrille's last night?

Mrs. Can. Nay, her bulk is her misfortune; and, when she

takes so much pains to get rid of it, you ought not to reflect on her.

Lady Sneer. That's very true, indeed.

Lady Teaz. Yes, I know she almost lives on acids and small whey; laces herself by pulleys; and often, in the hottest noon in summer, you may see her on a little squat pony, with her hair plaited up behind like a drummer's and puffing round the Ring on a full trot.

Mrs. Can. I thank you, Lady Teazle, for defending her.

Sir Pet. Yes, a good defence, truly.

Mrs. Can. Truly, Lady Teazle is as censorious as Miss Sallow.

Crab. Yes, and she is a curious being to pretend to be censorious—an awkward gawky, without any one good point under heaven.

Mrs. Can. Positively you shall not be so very severe. Miss Sallow is a near relation of mine by marriage, and, as for her person, great allowance is to be made; for, let me tell you, a woman labours under many disadvantages who tries to pass for a girl of six-and-thirty.

Lady Sneer. Though, surely, she is handsome still—and for the weakness in her eyes, considering how much she reads by candlelight, it is not to be wondered at.

Mrs. Can. True; and then as to her manner, upon my word I think it is particularly graceful, considering she never had the least education: for you know her mother was a Welsh milliner, and her father a sugar-baker at Bristol.

Sir Ben. Ah! you are both of you too good-natured!

Sir Pet. Yes, damned good-natured! This their own relation! mercy on me! [*Aside.*

Mrs. Can. For my part, I own I cannot bear to hear a friend ill-spoken of.

Sir Pet. No, to be sure!

Sir Ben. Oh! you are of a moral turn. Mrs. Candour and I can sit for an hour and hear Lady Stucco talk sentiment.

Lady Teaz. Nay, I vow Lady Stucco is very well with the dessert after dinner; for she's just like the French fruit one cracks for mottoes—made up of paint and proverb.

Mrs. Can. Well, I will never join in ridiculing a friend; and so I constantly tell my cousin Ogle, and you all know what pretensions she has to be critical on beauty.

Crab. Oh, to be sure! she has herself the oddest countenance that ever was seen; 'tis a collection of features from all the different countries of the globe.

Sir Ben. So she has, indeed—an Irish front——

Crab. Caledonian locks——

Sir Ben. Dutch nose——

Crab. Austrian lips——

Sir Ben. Complexion of a Spaniard——

Crab. And teeth *à la Chinoise*——

Sir Ben. In short, her face resembles a *table d'hôte* at Spa—where no two guests are of a nation——

Crab. Or a congress at the close of a general war—wherein all the members, even to her eyes, appear to have a different interest, and her nose and chin are the only parties likely to join issue.

Mrs. Can. Ha! ha! ha!

Sir Pet. Mercy on my life!—a person they dine with twice a week! [*Aside.*

Mrs. Can. Nay, but I vow you shall not carry the laugh off so—for give me leave to say, that Mrs. Ogle——

Sir Pet. Madam, madam, I beg your pardon—there's no stopping these good gentlemen's tongues. But when I tell you, Mrs. Candour, that the lady they are abusing is a particular friend of mine, I hope you'll not take her part.

Lady Sneer. Ha! ha! ha! well said, Sir Peter! but you are a cruel creature—too phlegmatic yourself for a jest, and too peevish to allow wit in others.

Sir Pet. Ah, madam, true wit is more nearly allied to good-nature than your ladyship is aware of.

Lady Teaz. True, Sir Peter: I believe they are so near akin that they can never be united.

Sir Ben. Or rather, suppose them man and wife, because one seldom sees them together.

Lady Teaz. But Sir Peter is such an enemy to scandal, I believe he would have it put down by parliament.

Sir Pet. 'Fore heaven, madam, if they were to consider the sporting with reputation of as much importance as poaching on manors, and pass an act for the preservation of fame, as well as game, I believe many would thank them for the bill.

Lady Sneer. O Lud! Sir Peter; would you deprive us of our privileges?

Sir Pet. Ay, madam; and then no person should be permitted to kill characters and run down reputations, but qualified old maids and disappointed widows.

Lady Sneer. Go, you monster!

Mrs. Can. But, surely, you would not be quite so severe on those who only report what they hear?

Sir Pet. Yes, madam, I would have law merchant for them

too; and in all cases of slander currency, whenever the drawer of the lie was not to be found, the injured parties should have a right to come on any of the indorsers.

Crab. Well, for my part, I believe there never was a scandalous tale without some foundation.

Lady Sneer. Come, ladies, shall we sit down to cards in the next room?

Enter SERVANT, *who whispers* SIR PETER.

Sir Pet. I'll be with them directly.—[*Exit* SERVANT.] I'll get away unperceived. [*Aside.*

Lady Sneer. Sir Peter, you are not going to leave us?

Sir Pet. Your ladyship must excuse me; I'm called away by particular business. But I leave my character behind me. [*Exit.*

Sir Ben. Well—certainly, Lady Teazle, that lord of yours is a strange being: I could tell you some stories of him would make you laugh heartily if he were not your husband.

Lady Teaz. Oh, pray don't mind that; come, do let's hear them. [*Exeunt all but* JOSEPH SURFACE *and* MARIA.

Jos. Surf. Maria, I see you have no satisfaction in this society.

Mar. How is it possible I should? If to raise malicious smiles at the infirmities or misfortunes of those who have never injured us be the province of wit or humour, Heaven grant me a double portion of dulness!

Jos. Surf. Yet they appear more ill-natured than they are; they have no malice at heart.

Mar. Then is their conduct still more contemptible; for, in my opinion, nothing could excuse the intemperance of their tongues but a natural and uncontrollable bitterness of mind.

Jos. Surf. Undoubtedly, madam; and it has always been a sentiment of mine, that to propagate a malicious truth wantonly is more despicable than to falsify from revenge. But can you, Maria, feel thus for others, and be unkind to me alone? Is hope to be denied the tenderest passion?

Mar. Why will you distress me by renewing this subject?

Jos. Surf. Ah, Maria! you would not treat me thus, and oppose your guardian, Sir Peter's will, but that I see that profligate Charles is still a favoured rival.

Mar. Ungenerously urged! But, whatever my sentiments are for that unfortunate young man, be assured I shall not feel more bound to give him up, because his distresses have lost him the regard even of a brother.

Jos. Surf. Nay, but, Maria, do not leave me with a frown: by all that's honest, I swear—— [*Kneels.*

Re-enter LADY TEAZLE *behind.*

[*Aside.*] Gad's life, here's Lady Teazle.—[*Aloud to* MARIA.] You must not—no, you shall not—for, though I have the greatest regard for Lady Teazle——

Mar. Lady Teazle!

Jos. Surf. Yet were Sir Peter to suspect——

Lady Teaz. [*Coming forward.*] What is this, pray? Does he take her for me?—Child, you are wanted in the next room.—[*Exit* MARIA.] What is all this, pray?

Jos. Surf. Oh, the most unlucky circumstance in nature! Maria has somehow suspected the tender concern I have for your happiness, and threatened to acquaint Sir Peter with her suspicions, and I was just endeavouring to reason with her when you came in.

Lady Teaz. Indeed! but you seemed to adopt a very tender mode of reasoning—do you usually argue on your knees?

Jos. Surf. Oh, she's a child, and I thought a little bombast ——But, Lady Teazle, when are you to give me your judgment on my library, as you promised?

Lady Teaz. No, no; I begin to think it would be imprudent, and you know I admit you as a lover no farther than fashion requires.

Jos. Surf. True—a mere Platonic cicisbeo, what every wife is entitled to.

Lady Teaz. Certainly, one must not be out of the fashion. However, I have so many of my country prejudices left, that, though Sir Peter's ill humour may vex me ever so, it never shall provoke me to——

Jos. Surf. The only revenge in your power. Well, I applaud your moderation.

Lady Teaz. Go—you are an insinuating wretch! But we shall be missed—let us join the company.

Jos. Surf. But we had best not return together.

Lady Teaz. Well, don't stay; for Maria shan't come to hear any more of your reasoning, I promise you. [*Exit.*

Jos. Surf. A curious dilemma, truly, my politics have run me into! I wanted, at first, only to ingratiate myself with Lady Teazle, that she might not be my enemy with Maria; and I have, I don't know how, become her serious lover. Sincerely I begin to wish I had never made such a point of gaining so

very good a character, for it has led me into so many cursed rogueries that I doubt I shall be exposed at last. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*A Room in* SIR PETER TEAZLE'S *House.*

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE *and* ROWLEY.

Sir Oliv. Ha! ha! ha! so my old friend is married, hey?—a young wife out of the country. Ha! ha! ha! that he should have stood bluff to old bachelor so long, and sink into a husband at last!

Row. But you must not rally him on the subject, Sir Oliver; 'tis a tender point, I assure you, though he has been married only seven months.

Sir Oliv. Then he has been just half a year on the stool of repentance!—Poor Peter! But you say he has entirely given up Charles—never sees him, hey?

Row. His prejudice against him is astonishing, and I am sure greatly increased by a jealousy of him with Lady Teazle, which he has industriously been led into by a scandalous society in the neighbourhood, who have contributed not a little to Charles's ill name. Whereas the truth is, I believe, if the lady is partial to either of them, his brother is the favourite.

Sir Oliv. Ay, I know there are a set of malicious, prating, prudent gossips, both male and female, who murder characters to kill time, and will rob a young fellow of his good name before he has years to know the value of it. But I am not to be prejudiced against my nephew by such, I promise you! No, no: if Charles has done nothing false or mean, I shall compound for his extravagance.

Row. Then, my life on't, you will reclaim him. Ah, sir, it gives me new life to find that your heart is not turned against him, and that the son of my good old master has one friend, however, left.

Sir Oliv. What! shall I forget, Master Rowley, when I was at his years myself? Egad, my brother and I were neither of us very prudent youths; and yet, I believe, you have not seen many better men than your old master was?

Row. Sir, 'tis this reflection gives me assurance that Charles may yet be a credit to his family. But here comes Sir Peter.

Sir Oliv. Egad, so he does! Mercy on me! he's greatly altered, and seems to have a settled married look! One may read husband in his face at this distance!

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE.

Sir Pet. Ha! Sir Oliver—my old friend! Welcome to England a thousand times!

Sir Oliv. Thank you, thank you, Sir Peter! and i'faith I am glad to find you well, believe me!

Sir Pet. Oh! 'tis a long time since we met—fifteen years, I doubt, Sir Oliver, and many a cross accident in the time.

Sir Oliv. Ay, I have had my share. But, what! I find you are married, hey, my old boy? Well, well, it can't be helped; and so—I wish you joy with all my heart!

Sir Pet. Thank you, thank you, Sir Oliver.—Yes, I have entered into—the happy state; but we'll not talk of that now.

Sir Oliv. True, true, Sir Peter; old friends should not begin on grievances at first meeting. No, no, no.

Row. [*Aside to* SIR OLIVER.] Take care, pray, sir.

Sir Oliv. Well, so one of my nephews is a wild rogue, hey?

Sir Pet. Wild! Ah! my old friend, I grieve for your disappointment there; he's a lost young man, indeed. However, his brother will make you amends; Joseph is, indeed, what a youth should be—everybody in the world speaks well of him.

Sir Oliv. I am sorry to hear it; he has too good a character to be an honest fellow. Everybody speaks well of him! Psha! then he has bowed as low to knaves and fools as to the honest dignity of genius and virtue.

Sir Pet. What, Sir Oliver! do you blame him for not making enemies?

Sir Oliv. Yes, if he has merit enough to deserve them.

Sir Pet. Well, well—you'll be convinced when you know him. 'Tis edification to hear him converse; he professes the noblest sentiments.

Sir Oliv. Oh, plague of his sentiments! If he salutes me with a scrap of morality in his mouth, I shall be sick directly. But, however, don't mistake me, Sir Peter; I don't mean to defend Charles's errors: but, before I form my judgment of either of them, I intend to make a trial of their hearts; and my friend Rowley and I have planned something for the purpose.

Row. And Sir Peter shall own for once he has been mistaken.

Sir Pet. Oh, my life on Joseph's honour!

Sir Oliv. Well—come, give us a bottle of good wine, and we'll drink the lads' health, and tell you our scheme.

Sir Pet. Allons, then!

Sir Oliv. And don't, Sir Peter, be so severe against your old friend's son. Odds my life! I am not sorry that he has run

out of the course a little: for my part, I hate to see prudence clinging to the green suckers of youth; 'tis like ivy round a sapling, and spoils the growth of the tree. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Room in* SIR PETER TEAZLE'S *House.*

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE, SIR OLIVER SURFACE, *and* ROWLEY.

Sir Pet. Well, then, we will see this fellow first, and have our wine afterwards. But how is this, Master Rowley? I don't see the jest of your scheme.

Row. Why, sir, this Mr. Stanley, whom I was speaking of, is nearly related to them by their mother. He was once a merchant in Dublin, but has been ruined by a series of undeserved misfortunes. He has applied, by letter, since his confinement, both to Mr. Surface and Charles: from the former he has received nothing but evasive promises of future service, while Charles has done all that his extravagance has left him power to do; and he is, at this time, endeavouring to raise a sum of money, part of which, in the midst of his own distresses, I know he intends for the service of poor Stanley.

Sir Oliv. Ah! he is my brother's son.

Sir Pet. Well, but how is Sir Oliver personally to——

Row. Why, sir, I will inform Charles and his brother that Stanley has obtained permission to apply personally to his friends; and, as they have neither of them ever seen him, let Sir Oliver assume his character, and he will have a fair opportunity of judging, at least, of the benevolence of their dispositions: and believe me, sir, you will find in the youngest brother one who, in the midst of folly and dissipation, has still, as our immortal bard expresses it,—

> "a heart to pity, and a hand
> Open as day, for melting charity."

Sir Pet. Psha! What signifies his having an open hand or purse either, when he has nothing left to give? Well, well, make the trial, if you please. But where is the fellow whom you brought for Sir Oliver to examine, relative to Charles's affairs?

Row. Below, waiting his commands, and no one can give him better intelligence.—This, Sir Oliver, is a friendly Jew, who, to do him justice, has done everything in his power to bring your nephew to a proper sense of his extravagance.

Sir Pet. Pray let us have him in.

Row. Desire Mr. Moses to walk upstairs.

[*Calls to* SERVANT.

Sir Pet. But, pray, why should you suppose he will speak the truth?

Row. Oh, I have convinced him that he has no chance of recovering certain sums advanced to Charles but through the bounty of Sir Oliver, who he knows is arrived; so that you may depend on his fidelity to his own interests. I have also another evidence in my power, one Snake, whom I have detected in a matter little short of forgery, and shall shortly produce to remove some of your prejudices, Sir Peter, relative to Charles and Lady Teazle.

Sir Pet. I have heard too much on that subject.

Row. Here comes the honest Israelite.

Enter MOSES.

—This is Sir Oliver.

Sir Oliv. Sir, I understand you have lately had great dealings with my nephew Charles.

Mos. Yes, Sir Oliver, I have done all I could for him; but he was ruined before he came to me for assistance.

Sir Oliv. That was unlucky, truly; for you have had no opportunity of showing your talents.

Mos. None at all; I hadn't the pleasure of knowing his distresses till he was some thousands worse than nothing.

Sir Oliv. Unfortunate, indeed! But I suppose you have done all in your power for him, honest Moses?

Mos. Yes, he knows that. This very evening I was to have brought him a gentleman from the city, who does not know him, and will, I believe, advance him some money.

Sir Pet. What, one Charles has never had money from before?

Mos. Yes, Mr. Premium, of Crutched Friars, formerly a broker.

Sir Pet. Egad, Sir Oliver, a thought strikes me!—Charles, you say, does not know Mr. Premium?

Mos. Not at all.

Sir Pet. Now then, Sir Oliver, you may have a better opportunity of satisfying yourself than by an old romancing tale of a poor relation: go with my friend Moses, and represent Premium, and then, I'll answer for it, you'll see your nephew in all his glory.

Sir Oliv. Egad, I like this idea better than the other, and I may visit Joseph afterwards as old Stanley.

Sir Pet. True—so you may.

Row. Well, this is taking Charles rather at a disadvantage, to be sure. However, Moses, you understand Sir Peter, and will be faithful?

Mos. You may depend upon me.—[*Looks at his watch.*] This is near the time I was to have gone.

Sir Oliv. I'll accompany you as soon as you please, Moses ——But hold! I have forgot one thing—how the plague shall I be able to pass for a Jew?

Mos. There's no need—the principal is Christian.

Sir Oliv. Is he? I'm very sorry to hear it. But, then again, an't I rather too smartly dressed to look like a money-lender?

Sir Pet. Not at all; 'twould not be out of character, if you went in your carriage—would it, Moses?

Mos. Not in the least.

Sir Oliv. Well, but how must I talk? there's certainly some cant of usury and mode of treating that I ought to know.

Sir Pet. Oh, there's not much to learn. The great point, as I take it, is to be exorbitant enough in your demands. Hey, Moses?

Mos. Yes, that's a very great point.

Sir Oliv. I'll answer for't I'll not be wanting in that. I'll ask him eight or ten per cent. on the loan, at least.

Mos. If you ask him no more than that, you'll be discovered immediately.

Sir Oliv. Hey! what, the plague! how much then?

Mos. That depends upon the circumstances. If he appears not very anxious for the supply, you should require only forty or fifty per cent.; but if you find him in great distress, and want the moneys very bad, you may ask double.

Sir Pet. A good honest trade you're learning, Sir Oliver!

Sir Oliv. Truly, I think so—and not unprofitable.

Mos. Then, you know, you haven't the moneys yourself, but are forced to borrow them for him of a friend.

Sir Oliv. Oh! I borrow it of a friend, do I?

Mos. And your friend is an unconscionable dog: but you can't help that.

Sir Oliv. My friend an unconscionable dog, is he?

Mos. Yes, and he himself has not the moneys by him, but is forced to sell stock at a great loss.

Sir Oliv. He is forced to sell stock at a great loss, is he? Well, that's very kind of him.

Sir Pet. I'faith, Sir Oliver—Mr. Premium, I mean—you'll soon be master of the trade. But, Moses! would not you have

him run out a little against the annuity bill? That would be in character, I should think.

Mos. Very much.

Row. And lament that a young man now must be at years of discretion before he is suffered to ruin himself?

Mos. Ay, great pity!

Sir Pet. And abuse the public for allowing merit to an act whose only object is to snatch misfortune and imprudence from the rapacious gripe of usury, and give the minor a chance of inheriting his estate without being undone by coming into possession.

Sir Oliv. So, so—Moses shall give me further instructions as we go together.

Sir Pet. You will not have much time, for your nephew lives hard by.

Sir Oliv. Oh, never fear! my tutor appears so able, that though Charles lived in the next street, it must be my own fault if I am not a complete rogue before I turn the corner.

[*Exit with* MOSES.

Sir Pet. So, now, I think Sir Oliver will be convinced: you are partial, Rowley, and would have prepared Charles for the other plot.

Row. No, upon my word, Sir Peter.

Sir Pet. Well, go bring me this Snake, and I'll hear what he has to say presently. I see Maria, and want to speak with her. —[*Exit* ROWLEY.] I should be glad to be convinced my suspicions of Lady Teazle and Charles were unjust. I have never yet opened my mind on this subject to my friend Joseph—I am determined I will do it—he will give me his opinion sincerely.

Enter MARIA.

So, child, has Mr. Surface returned with you?

Mar. No, sir; he was engaged.

Sir Pet. Well, Maria, do you not reflect, the more you converse with that amiable young man, what return his partiality for you deserves?

Mar. Indeed, Sir Peter, your frequent importunity on this subject distresses me extremely—you compel me to declare, that I know no man who has ever paid me a particular attention whom I would not prefer to Mr. Surface.

Sir Pet. So—here's perverseness! No, no, Maria, 'tis Charles only whom you would prefer. 'Tis evident his vices and follies have won your heart.

Mar. This is unkind, sir. You know I have obeyed you in

neither seeing nor corresponding with him: I have heard enough to convince me that he is unworthy my regard. Yet I cannot think it culpable, if, while my understanding severely condemns his vices, my heart suggests some pity for his distresses.

Sir Pet. Well, well, pity him as much as you please; but give your heart and hand to a worthier object.

Mar. Never to his brother!

Sir Pet. Go, perverse and obstinate! But take care, madam, you have never yet known what the authority of a guardian is: don't compel me to inform you of it.

Mar. I can only say, you shall not have just reason. 'Tis true, by my father's will, I am for a short period bound to regard you as his substitute; but must cease to think you so, when you would compel me to be miserable. [*Exit.*

Sir Pet. Was ever man so crossed as I am, everything conspiring to fret me! I had not been involved in matrimony a fortnight, before her father, a hale and hearty man, died, on purpose, I believe, for the pleasure of plaguing me with the care of his daughter.—[*Lady Teazle sings without.*] But here comes my helpmate! She appears in great good humour. How happy I should be if I could tease her into loving me, though but a little!

Enter LADY TEAZLE.

Lady Teaz. Lud! Sir Peter, I hope you haven't been quarrelling with Maria? It is not using me well to be ill humoured when I am not by.

Sir Pet. Ah, Lady Teazle, you might have the power to make me good humoured at all times.

Lady Teaz. I am sure I wish I had; for I want you to be in a charming sweet temper at this moment. Do be good humoured now, and let me have two hundred pounds, will you?

Sir Pet. Two hundred pounds; what an't I to be in a good humour without paying for it! But speak to me thus, and i'faith there's nothing I could refuse you. You shall have it; but seal me a bond for the repayment.

Lady Teaz. Oh, no—there—my note of hand will do as well. [*Offering her hand.*

Sir Pet. And you shall no longer reproach me with not giving you an independent settlement. I mean shortly to surprise you: but shall we always live thus, hey?

Lady Teaz. If you please. I'm sure I don't care how soon we leave off quarrelling, provided you'll own you were tired first.

Sir Pet. Well—then let our future contest be, who shall be most obliging.

Lady Teaz. I assure you, Sir Peter, good nature becomes you. You look now as you did before we were married, when you used to walk with me under the elms, and tell me stories of what a gallant you were in your youth, and chuck me under the chin, you would; and ask me if I thought I could love an old fellow, who would deny me nothing—didn't you?

Sir Pet. Yes, yes, and you were as kind and attentive——

Lady Teaz. Ay, so I was, and would always take your part, when my acquaintance used to abuse you, and turn you into ridicule.

Sir Pet. Indeed!

Lady Teaz. Ay, and when my cousin Sophy has called you a stiff, peevish old bachelor, and laughed at me for thinking of marrying one who might be my father, I have always defended you, and said, I didn't think you so ugly by any means.

Sir Pet. Thank you.

Lady Teaz. And I dared say you'd make a very good sort of a husband.

Sir Pet. And you prophesied right; and we shall now be the happiest couple——

Lady Teaz. And never differ again?

Sir Pet. No, never!—though at the same time, indeed, my dear Lady Teazle, you must watch your temper very seriously; for in all our little quarrels, my dear, if you recollect, my love, you always began first.

Lady Teaz. I beg your pardon, my dear Sir Peter: indeed, you always gave the provocation.

Sir Pet. Now, see, my angel! take care—contradicting isn't the way to keep friends.

Lady Teaz. Then, don't you begin it, my love!

Sir Pet. There, now! you—you are going on. You don't perceive, my life, that you are just doing the very thing which you know always makes me angry.

Lady Teaz. Nay, you know if you will be angry without any reason, my dear——

Sir Pet. There! now you want to quarrel again.

Lady Teaz. No, I'm sure I don't: but, if you will be so peevish——

Sir Pet. There now! who begins first?

Lady Teaz. Why, you, to be sure. I said nothing—but there's no bearing your temper.

Sir Pet. No, no, madam: the fault's in your own temper.

Lady Teaz. Ay, you are just what my cousin Sophy said you would be.

Sir Pet. Your cousin Sophy is a forward impertinent gipsy.

Lady Teaz. You are a great bear, I'm sure, to abuse my relations.

Sir Pet. Now may all the plagues of marriage be doubled on me, if ever I try to be friends with you any more!

Lady Teaz. So much the better.

Sir Pet. No, no, madam: 'tis evident you never cared a pin for me, and I was a madman to marry you—a pert, rural coquette, that had refused half the honest 'squires in the neighbourhood!

Lady Teaz. And I am sure I was a fool to marry you—an old dangling bachelor, who was single at fifty, only because he never could meet with any one who would have him.

Sir Pet. Ay, ay, madam; but you were pleased enough to listen to me: you never had such an offer before.

Lady Teaz. No! didn't I refuse Sir Tivy Terrier, who everybody said would have been a better match? for his estate is just as good as yours, and he has broke his neck since we have been married.

Sir Pet. I have done with you, madam! You are an unfeeling, ungrateful—but there's an end of everything. I believe you capable of everything that is bad. Yes, madam, I now believe the reports relative to you and Charles, madam. Yes, madam, you and Charles are, not without grounds——

Lady Teaz. Take care, Sir Peter! you had better not insinuate any such thing! I'll not be suspected without cause, I promise you.

Sir Pet. Very well, madam! very well! a separate maintenance as soon as you please. Yes, madam, or a divorce! I'll make an example of myself for the benefit of all old bachelors. Let us separate, madam.

Lady Teaz. Agreed! agreed! And now, my dear Sir Peter, we are of a mind once more, we may be the happiest couple, and never differ again, you know: ha! ha! ha! Well, you are going to be in a passion, I see, and I shall only interrupt you—so, bye! bye! [*Exit.*

Sir Pet. Plagues and tortures! can't I make her angry either! Oh, I am the most miserable fellow! But I'll not bear her presuming to keep her temper: no! she may break my heart, but she shan't keep her temper. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* CHARLES SURFACE'S *House.*

Enter TRIP, MOSES, *and* SIR OLIVER SURFACE.

Trip. Here, Master Moses! if you'll stay a moment, I'll try whether, what's the gentleman's name?

Sir Oliv. Mr. Moses, what is my name? [*Aside to* MOSES.

Mos. Mr. Premium.

Trip. Premium—very well. [*Exit, taking snuff.*

Sir Oliv. To judge by the servants, one wouldn't believe the master was ruined. But what!—sure, this was my brother's house?

Mos. Yes, sir; Mr. Charles bought it of Mr. Joseph, with the furniture, pictures, &c., just as the old gentleman left it. Sir Peter thought it a piece of extravagance in him.

Sir Oliv. In my mind, the other's economy in selling it to him was more reprehensible by half.

Re-enter TRIP.

Trip. My master says you must wait, gentlemen: he has company, and can't speak with you yet.

Sir Oliv. If he knew who it was wanted to see him, perhaps he would not send such a message?

Trip. Yes, yes, sir; he knows you are here—I did not forget little Premium: no, no, no.

Sir Oliv. Very well; and I pray, sir, what may be your name?

Trip. Trip, sir; my name is Trip, at your service.

Sir Oliv. Well, then, Mr. Trip, you have a pleasant sort of place here, I guess?

Trip. Why, yes—here are three or four of us pass our time agreeably enough; but then our wages are sometimes a little in arrear—and not very great either—but fifty pounds a year, and find our own bags and bouquets.

Sir Oliv. Bags and bouquets! halters and bastinadoes! [*Aside.*

Trip. And *à propos*, Moses, have you been able to get me that little bill discounted?

Sir Oliv. Wants to raise money, too!—mercy on me! Has his distresses too, I warrant, like a lord, and affects creditors and duns. [*Aside.*

Mos. 'Twas not be done, indeed, Mr. Trip.

Trip. Good lack, you surprise me! My friend Brush has indorsed it, and I thought when he put his name at the back of a bill 'twas the same as cash.

Mos. No, 'twouldn't do.

Trip. A small sum—but twenty pounds. Hark'ee, Moses, do you think you couldn't get it me by way of annuity?

Sir Oliv. An annuity! ha! ha! a footman raise money by way of annuity! Well done, luxury, egad! [*Aside.*

Mos. Well, but you must insure your place.

Trip. Oh, with all my heart! I'll insure my place, and my life too, if you please.

Sir Oliv. It's more than I would your neck. [*Aside.*

Mos. But is there nothing you could deposit?

Trip. Why, nothing capital of my master's wardrobe has dropped lately; but I could give you a mortgage on some of his winter clothes, with equity of redemption before November —or you shall have the reversion of the French velvet, or a post-obit on the blue and silver;—these, I should think, Moses, with a few pair of point ruffles, as a collateral security—hey, my little fellow?

Mos. Well, well. [*Bell rings.*

Trip. Egad, I heard the bell! I believe, gentlemen, I can now introduce you. Don't forget the annuity, little Moses! This way, gentlemen, I'll insure my place, you know.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] If the man be a shadow of the master, this is the temple of dissipation indeed! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Another Room in the same.*

CHARLES SURFACE, SIR HARRY BUMPER, CARELESS, *and* GENTLEMEN, *discovered drinking.*

Chas. Surf. 'Fore heaven, 'tis true!—there's the great degeneracy of the age. Many of our acquaintance have taste, spirit, and politeness; but, plague on't, they won't drink.

Care. It is so, indeed, Charles! they give into all the substantial luxuries of the table, and abstain from nothing but wine and wit. Oh, certainly society suffers by it intolerably! for now, instead of the social spirit of raillery that used to mantle over a glass of bright Burgundy, their conversation is become just like the Spa-water they drink, which has all the pertness and flatulency of champagne, without its spirit or flavour.

1 *Gent.* But what are they to do who love play better than wine?

Care. True! there's Sir Harry diets himself for gaming, and is now under a hazard regimen.

Chas. Surf. Then he'll have the worst of it. What! you wouldn't train a horse for the course by keeping him from corn?

For my part, egad, I'm never so successful as when I am a little merry: let me throw on a bottle of champagne, and I never lose.

All. Hey, what?

Care. At least I never feel my losses, which is exactly the same thing.

2 Gent. Ay, that I believe.

Chas. Surf. And then, what man can pretend to be a believer in love, who is an abjurer of wine? 'Tis the test by which the lover knows his own heart. Fill a dozen bumpers to a dozen beauties, and she that floats at the top is the maid that has bewitched you.

Care. Now then, Charles, be honest, and give us your real favourite.

Chas. Surf. Why, I have withheld her only in compassion to you. If I toast her, you must give a round of her peers, which is impossible—on earth.

Care. Oh, then we'll find some canonised vestals or heathen goddesses that will do, I warrant!

Chas. Surf. Here then, bumpers, you rogues! bumpers! Maria! Maria!——

Sir Har. Maria who?

Chas. Surf. Oh, damn the surname!—'tis too formal to be registered in Love's calendar—Maria!

All. Maria!

Chas. Surf. But now, Sir Harry, beware, we must have beauty superlative.

Care. Nay, never study, Sir Harry: we'll stand to the toast, though your mistress should want an eye, and you know you have a song will excuse you.

Sir Har. Egad, so I have! and I'll give him the song instead of the lady. [*Sings.*

Here's to the maiden of bashful fifteen;
Here's to the widow of fifty;
Here's to the flaunting extravagant quean,
And here's to the housewife that's thrifty.

Chorus. Let the toast pass,—
Drink to the lass,
I'll warrant she'll prove an excuse for the glass.

Here's to the charmer whose dimples we prize;
Now to the maid who has none, sir:
Here's to the girl with a pair of blue eyes,
And here's to the nymph with but one, sir.

Chorus. Let the toast pass, &c.

Here's to the maid with a bosom of snow:
Now to her that's as brown as a berry:
Here's to the wife with a face full of woe,
And now to the damsel that's merry.

Chorus. Let the toast pass, &c.

For let 'em be clumsy, or let 'em be slim,
Young or ancient, I care not a feather;
So fill a pint bumper quite up to the brim,
So fill up your glasses, nay, fill to the brim,
And let us e'en toast them together.

Chorus. Let the toast pass, &c.

All. Bravo! Bravo!

Enter TRIP, *and whispers* CHARLES SURFACE.

Chas. Surf. Gentlemen, you must excuse me a little.—Careless, take the chair, will you?

Care. Nay, pr'ythee, Charles, what now? This is one of your peerless beauties, I suppose, dropped in by chance?

Chas. Surf. No, faith! To tell you the truth, 'tis a Jew and a broker, who are come by appointment.

Care. Oh, damn it! let's have the Jew in.

1 *Gent.* Ay, and the broker too, by all means.

2 *Gent.* Yes, yes, the Jew and the broker.

Chas. Surf. Egad, with all my heart!—Trip, bid the gentlemen walk in.—[*Exit* TRIP.] Though there's one of them a stranger, I can tell you.

Care. Charles, let us give them some generous Burgundy, and perhaps they'll grow conscientious.

Chas. Surf. Oh, hang 'em, no! wine does but draw forth a man's natural qualities; and to make them drink would only be to whet their knavery.

Re-enter TRIP, *with* SIR OLIVER SURFACE *and* MOSES.

Chas Surf. So, honest Moses; walk in, pray, Mr. Premium—that's the gentleman's name, isn't it, Moses?

Mos. Yes, sir.

Chas. Surf. Set chairs, Trip.—Sit down, Mr. Premium.—Glasses, Trip.—[TRIP *gives chairs and glasses, and exit.*] Sit down, Moses.—Come, Mr. Premium, I'll give you a sentiment; here's *Success to usury!*—Moses, fill the gentleman a bumper.

Mos. Success to usury! [*Drinks.*

Care. Right, Moses—usury is prudence and industry, and deserves to succeed.

Sir Oliv. Then here's—All the success it deserves! [*Drinks.*

Care. No, no, that won't do! Mr. Premium, you have demurred at the toast, and must drink it in a pint bumper.

1 *Gent.* A pint bumper, at least.

Mos. Oh, pray, sir, consider—Mr. Premium's a gentleman.

Care. And therefore loves good wine.

2 *Gent.* Give Moses a quart glass—this is mutiny, and a high contempt for the chair.

Care. Here, now for't! I'll see justice done, to the last drop of my bottle.

Sir Oliv. Nay, pray, gentlemen—I did not expect this usage.

Chas. Surf. No, hang it, you shan't; Mr. Premium's a stranger.

Sir Oliv. Odd! I wish I was well out of their company. [*Aside.*

Care. Plague on 'em then! if they won't drink, we'll not sit down with them. Come, Harry, the dice are in the next room.—Charles, you'll join us when you have finished your business with the gentlemen?

Chas. Surf. I will! I will!—[*Exeunt* SIR HARRY BUMPER *and* GENTLEMEN; CARELESS *following.*] Careless.

Care. [*Returning.*] Well!

Chas. Surf. Perhaps I may want you.

Care. Oh, you know I am always ready: word, note, or bond, 'tis all the same to me. [*Exit.*

Mos. Sir, this is Mr. Premium, a gentleman of the strictest honour and secrecy; and always performs what he undertakes. Mr. Premium, this is——

Chas. Surf. Psha! have done. Sir, my friend Moses is a very honest fellow, but a little slow at expression: he'll be an hour giving us our titles. Mr. Premium, the plain state of the matter is this: I am an extravagant young fellow who wants to borrow money; you I take to be a prudent old fellow, who have got money to lend. I am blockhead enough to give fifty per cent. sooner than not have it! and you, I presume, are rogue enough to take a hundred if you can get it. Now, sir, you see we are acquainted at once, and may proceed to business without further ceremony.

Sir Oliv. Exceeding frank, upon my word. I see, sir, you are not a man of many compliments.

Chas. Surf. Oh, no, sir! plain dealing in business I always think best.

Sir Oliv. Sir, I like you the better for it. However, you are mistaken in one thing; I have no money to lend, but I believe I could procure some of a friend; but then he's an unconscion-

able dog. Isn't he, Moses? And must sell stock to accommodate you.. Mustn't he, Moses?

Mos. Yes, indeed! You know I always speak the truth and scorn to tell a lie!

Chas. Surf. Right. People that speak truth generally do. But these are trifles, Mr. Premium. What! I know money isn't to be bought without paying for't!

Sir Oliv. Well, but what security could you give? You have no land, I suppose?

Chas. Surf. Not a mole-hill, nor a twig, but what's in the bough-pots out of the window!

Sir Oliv. Nor any stock, I presume?

Chas. Surf. Nothing but live stock—and that's only a few pointers and ponies. But pray, Mr. Premium, are you acquainted at all with any of my connections?

Sir Oliv. Why, to say truth, I am.

Chas. Surf. Then you must know that I have a devilish rich uncle in the East Indies, Sir Oliver Surface, from whom I have the greatest expectations?

Sir Oliv. That you have a wealthy uncle, I have heard; but how your expectations will turn out is more, I believe, than you can tell.

Chas. Surf. Oh, no!—there can be no doubt. They tell me I'm a prodigious favourite, and that he talks of leaving me everything.

Sir Oliv. Indeed! this is the first I've heard of it.

Chas. Surf. Yes, yes, 'tis just so. Moses knows 'tis true; don't you, Moses?

Mos. Oh, yes! I'll swear to't.

Sir Oliv. Egad, they'll persuade me presently I'm at Bengal. [*Aside.*

Chas. Surf. Now I propose, Mr. Premium, if it's agreeable to you, a post-obit on Sir Oliver's life: though at the same time the old fellow has been so liberal to me, that I give you my word, I should be very sorry to hear that anything had happened to him.

Sir Oliv. Not more than I should, I assure you. But the bond you mention happens to be just the worst security you could offer me—for I might live to a hundred and never see the principal.

Chas. Surf. Oh, yes, you would! the moment Sir Oliver dies, you know, you would come on me for the money.

Sir Oliv. Then I believe I should be the most unwelcome dun you ever had in your life.

Chas. Surf. What! I suppose you're afraid that Sir Oliver is too good a life?

Sir Oliv. No, indeed I am not; though I have heard he is as hale and healthy as any man of his years in Christendom.

Chas. Surf. There again, now, you are misinformed. No, no, the climate has hurt him considerably, poor uncle Oliver. Yes, yes, he breaks apace, I'm told—and is so much altered lately that his nearest relations would not know him.

Sir Oliv. No! Ha! ha! ha! so much altered lately that his nearest relations would not know him! Ha! ha! ha! egad —ha! ha! ha!

Chas. Surf. Ha! ha!—you're glad to hear that, little Premium?

Sir Oliv. No, no, I'm not.

Chas. Surf. Yes, yes, you are—ha! ha! ha!—you know that mends your chance.

Sir Oliv. But I'm told Sir Oliver is coming over; nay, some say he is actually arrived.

Chas. Surf. Psha! sure I must know better than you whether he's come or not. No, no, rely on't he's at this moment at Calcutta. Isn't he, Moses?

Mos. Oh, yes, certainly.

Sir Oliv. Very true, as you say, you must know better than I, though I have it from pretty good anthority. Haven't I, Moses?

Mos. Yes, most undoubted!

Sir Oliv. But, sir, as I understand you want a few hundreds immediately, is there nothing you could dispose of?

Chas. Surf. How do you mean?

Sir Oliv. For instance, now, I have heard that your father left behind him a great quantity of massy old plate.

Chas. Surf. O Lud! that's gone long ago. Moses can tell you how better than I can.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] Good lack! all the family race-cups and corporation-bowls!—[*Aloud.*] Then it was also supposed that his library was one of the most valuable and compact.

Chas. Surf. Yes, yes, so it was—vastly too much so for a private gentleman. For my part, I was always of a communicative disposition, so I thought it a shame to keep so much knowledge to myself.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] Mercy upon me! learning that had run in the family like an heir-loom!—[*Aloud.*] Pray, what has become of the books?

Chas. Surf. You must inquire of the auctioneer, Master Premium, for I don't believe even Moses can direct you.

Mos. I know nothing of books.

Sir Oliv. So, so, nothing of the family property left, I suppose?

Chas. Surf. Not much, indeed; unless you have a mind to the family pictures. I have got a room full of ancestors above: and if you have a taste for old paintings, egad, you shall have 'em a bargain!

Sir Oliv. Hey! what the devil! sure, you wouldn't sell your forefathers, would you?

Chas. Surf. Every man of them, to the best bidder.

Sir Oliv. What! your great-uncles and aunts?

Chas. Surf. Ay, and my great-grandfathers and grandmothers too.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] Now I give him up!—[*Aloud.*] What the plague, have you no bowels for your own kindred? Odd's life! do you take me for Shylock in the play, that you would raise money of me on your own flesh and blood?

Chas. Surf. Nay, my little broker, don't be angry: what need you care, if you have your money's worth?

Sir Oliv. Well, I'll be the purchaser: I think I can dispose of the family canvas.—[*Aside.*] Oh, I'll never forgive him this! never!

Re-enter CARELESS.

Care. Come, Charles, what keeps you?

Chas. Surf. I can't come yet. I'faith, we are going to have a sale above stairs; here's little Premium will buy all my ancestors!

Care. Oh, burn your ancestors!

Chas. Surf. No, he may do that afterwards, if he pleases. Stay, Careless, we want you: egad, you shall be auctioneer—so come along with us.

Care. Oh, have with you, if that's the case. I can handle a hammer as well as a dice-box! Going! going!

Sir Oliv. Oh, the profligates! [*Aside.*

Chas. Surf. Come, Moses, you shall be appraiser, if we want one. Gad's life, little Premium, you don't seem to like the business?

Sir Oliv. Oh, yes, I do, vastly! Ha! ha! ha! yes, yes, I think it a rare joke to sell one's family by auction—ha! ha!—[*Aside.*] Oh, the prodigal!

Chas. Surf. To be sure! when a man wants money, where the plague should he get assistance, if he can't make free with his own relations? [*Exeunt.*

Sir Oliv. I'll never forgive him; never! never!

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Picture Room in* CHARLES SURFACE'S *House.*

Enter CHARLES SURFACE, SIR OLIVER SURFACE, MOSES, *and* CARELESS.

Chas. Surf. Walk in, gentlemen, pray walk in;—here they are, the family of the Surfaces, up to the Conquest.

Sir Oliv. And, in my opinion, a goodly collection.

Chas. Surf. Ay, ay, these are done in the true spirit of portrait-painting; no *volontière grace* or expression. Not like the works of your modern Raphaels, who give you the strongest resemblance, yet contrive to make your portrait independent of you; so that you may sink the original and not hurt the picture. No, no; the merit of these is the inveterate likeness—all stiff and awkward as the originals, and like nothing in human nature besides.

Sir Oliv. Ah! we shall never see such figures of men again.

Chas. Surf. I hope not. Well, you see, Master Premium, what a domestic character I am; here I sit of an evening surrounded by my family. But come, get to your pulpit, Mr. Auctioneer; here's an old gouty chair of my grandfather's will answer the purpose.

Care. Ay, ay, this will do. But, Charles, I haven't a hammer; and what's an auctioneer without his hammer?

Chas. Surf. Egad, that's true. What parchment have we here? Oh, our genealogy in full. [*Taking pedigree down.*] Here, Careless, you shall have no common bit of mahogany, here's the family tree for you, you rogue! This shall be your hammer, and now you may knock down my ancestors with their own pedigree.

Sir Oliv. What an unnatural rogue!—an *ex post facto* parricide! [*Aside.*

Care. Yes, yes, here's a list of your generation indeed;—faith, Charles, this is the most convenient thing you could have found for the business, for 'twill not only serve as a hammer, but a catalogue into the bargain. Come, begin—A-going, a-going, a-going!

Chas. Surf. Bravo, Careless! Well, here's my great uncle, Sir Richard Ravelin, a marvellous good general in his day, I assure you. He served in all the Duke of Marlborough's wars, and got that cut over his eye at the battle of Malplaquet. What say you, Mr. Premium? look at him—there's a hero! not cut out of his feathers, as your modern clipped captains are.

but enveloped in wig and regimentals, as a general should be. What do you bid?

Sir Oliv. [*Aside to Moses.*] Bid him speak.

Mos. Mr. Premium would have you speak.

Chas. Surf. Why, then, he shall have him for ten pounds, and I'm sure that's not dear for a staff-officer.

Sir. Oliv. [*Aside.*] Heaven deliver me! his famous uncle Richard for ten pounds!—[*Aloud.*] Very well, sir, I take him at that.

Chas. Surf. Careless, knock down my uncle Richard.—Here, now, is a maiden sister of his, my great-aunt Deborah, done by Kneller, in his best manner, and esteemed a very formidable likeness. There she is, you see, a shepherdess feeding her flock. You shall have her for five pounds ten—the sheep are worth the money.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] Ah! poor Deborah! a woman who set such a value on herself!—[*Aloud.*] Five pounds ten—she's mine.

Chas. Surf. Knock down my aunt Deborah! Here, now, are two that were a sort of cousins of theirs.—You see, Moses, these pictures were done some time ago, when beaux wore wigs, and the ladies their own hair.

Sir Oliv. Yes, truly, head-dresses appear to have been a little lower in those days.

Chas. Surf. Well, take that couple for the same.

Mos. 'Tis a good bargain.

Chas. Surf. Careless!—This, now, is a grandfather of my mother's, a learned judge, well known on the western circuit.—What do you rate him at, Moses?

Mos. Four guineas.

Chas. Surf. Four guineas! Gad's life, you don't bid me the price of his wig.—Mr. Premium, you have more respect for the woolsack; do let us knock his lordship down at fifteen.

Sir Oliv. By all means.

Care. Gone!

Chas. Surf. And there are two brothers of his, William and Walter Blunt, Esquires, both members of Parliament, and noted speakers; and, what's very extraordinary, I believe, this is the first time they were ever bought or sold.

Sir Oliv. That is very extraordinary, indeed! I'll take them at your own price, for the honour of Parliament.

Care. Well said, little Premium! I'll knock them down at forty.

Chas. Surf. Here's a jolly fellow—I don't know what re-

lation, but he was mayor of Norwich: take him at eight pounds.

Sir Oliv. No, no; six will do for the mayor.

Chas. Surf. Come, make it guineas, and I'll throw you the two aldermen there into the bargain.

Sir Oliv. They're mine.

Chas. Surf. Careless, knock down the mayor and aldermen. But, plague on't! we shall be all day retailing in this manner; do let us deal wholesale: what say you, little Premium? Give me three hundred pounds for the rest of the family in the lump.

Care. Ay, ay, that will be the best way.

Sir Oliv. Well, well, anything to accommodate you; they are mine. But there is one portrait which you have always passed over.

Care. What, that ill-looking little fellow over the settee?

Sir Oliv. Yes, sir, I mean that; though I don't think him so ill-looking a little fellow, by any means.

Chas. Surf. What, that? Oh; that's my uncle Oliver! 'Twas done before he went to India.

Care. Your uncle Oliver! Gad, then you'll never be friends, Charles. That, now, to me, is as stern a looking rogue as ever I saw; an unforgiving eye, and a damned disinheriting countenance! an inveterate knave, depend on't. Don't you think so, little Premium?

Sir Oliv. Upon my soul, sir, I do not; I think it is as honest a looking face as any in the room, dead or alive. But I suppose uncle Oliver goes with the rest of the lumber?

Chas. Surf. No, hang it! I'll not part with poor Noll. The old fellow has been very good to me, and, egad, I'll keep his picture while I've a room to put it in.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] The rogue's my nephew after all!—[*Aloud.*] But, sir, I have somehow taken a fancy to that picture.

Chas. Surf. I'm sorry for't, for you certainly will not have it. Oons, haven't you got enough of them?

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] I forgive him everything!—[*Aloud.*] But, sir, when I take a whim in my head, I don't value money. I'll give you as much for that as for all the rest.

Chas. Surf. Don't tease me, master broker; I tell you I'll not part with it, and there's an end of it.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] How like his father the dog is—[*Aloud.*] Well, well, I have done.—[*Aside.*] I did not perceive it before, but I think I never saw such a striking resemblance.—[*Aloud.*] Here is a draught for your sum.

Chas. Surf. Why, 'tis for eight hundred pounds!

Sir Oliv. You will not let Sir Oliver go?

Chas. Surf. Zounds! no! I tell you, once more.

Sir Oliv. Then never mind the difference, we'll balance that another time. But give me your hand on the bargain; you are an honest fellow, Charles—I beg pardon, sir, for being so free.—Come, Moses.

Chas. Surf. Egad, this is a whimsical old fellow!—But hark'ee, Premium, you'll prepare lodgings for these gentlemen.

Sir Oliv. Yes, yes, I'll send for them in a day or two.

Chas. Surf. But hold; do now send a genteel conveyance for them, for, I assure you, they were most of them used to ride in their own carriages.

Sir Oliv. I will, I will—for all but Oliver.

Chas. Surf. Ay, all but the little nabob.

Sir Oliv. You're fixed on that?

Chas. Surf. Peremptorily.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] A dear extravagant rogue!—[*Aloud.*] Good day!—Come, Moses.—[*Aside.*] Let me hear now who dares call him profligate! [*Exit with* MOSES.

Care. Why, this is the oddest genius of the sort I ever met with!

Chas. Surf. Egad, he's the prince of brokers, I think. I wonder how the devil Moses got acquainted with so honest a fellow.—Ha! here's Rowley.—Do, Careless, say I'll join the company in a few moments.

Care. I will—but don't let that old blockhead persuade you to squander any of that money on old musty debts, or any such nonsense; for tradesmen, Charles, are the most exorbitant fellows.

Chas. Surf. Very true, and paying them is only encouraging them.

Care. Nothing else.

Chas. Surf. Ay, ay, never fear.—[*Exit* CARELESS.] So! this was an odd old fellow, indeed. Let me see, two-thirds of these five hundred and thirty odd pounds are mine by right. 'Fore Heaven! I find one's ancestors are more valuable relations than I took them for!—Ladies and gentlemen, your most obedient and very grateful servant.

[*Bows ceremoniously to the pictures.*

Enter ROWLEY.

Ha! old Rowley! egad, you are just come in time to take leave of your old acquaintance.

Row. Yes, I heard they were a-going. But I wonder you can have such spirits under so many distresses.

Chas. Surf. Why, there's the point! my distresses are so many, that I can't afford to part with my spirits; but I shall be rich and splenetic, all in good time. However, I suppose you are surprised that I am not more sorrowful at parting with so many near relations; to be sure, 'tis very affecting: but you see they never move a muscle, so why should I?

Row. There's no making you serious a moment.

Chas. Surf. Yes, faith, I am so now. Here, my honest Rowley, here, get me this changed directly, and take a hundred pounds of it immediately to old Stanley.

Row. A hundred pounds! Consider only——

Chas. Surf. Gad's life, don't talk about it! poor Stanley's wants are pressing, and, if you don't make haste, we shall have some one call that has a better right to the money,

Row. Ah! there's the point! I never will cease dunning you with the old proverb——

Chas. Surf. Be just before you're generous.—Why, so I would if I could; but Justice is an old hobbling beldame, and I can't get her to keep pace with Generosity, for the soul of me.

Row. Yet, Charles, believe me, one hour's reflection——

Chas. Surf. Ay, ay, it's very true; but, hark'ee, Rowley, while I have, by Heaven I'll give; so, damn your economy! and now for hazard. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Another room in the same.*

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE *and* MOSES.

Mos. Well, sir, I think, as Sir Peter said, you have seen Mr. Charles in high glory; 'tis great pity he's so extravagant.

Sir Oliv. True, but he would not sell my picture.

Mos. And loves wine and women so much.

Sir Oliv. But he would not sell my picture.

Mos. And games so deep.

Sir Oliv. But he would not sell my picture. Oh, here's Rowley.

Enter ROWLEY.

Row. So, Sir Oliver, I find you have made a purchase——

Sir Oliv. Yes, yes, our young rake has parted with his ancestors like old tapestry.

Row. And here has he commissioned me to re-deliver you part of the purchase money—I mean, though, in your necessitous character of old Stanley.

Mos. Ah! there is the pity of all; he is so damned charitable.

Row. And I left a hosier and two tailors in the hall, who, I'm sure, won't be paid, and this hundred would satisfy them.

Sir Oliv. Well, well, I'll pay his debts, and his benevolence too. But now I am no more a broker, and you shall introduce me to the elder brother as old Stanley.

Row. Not yet awhile; Sir Peter, I know, means to call there about this time.

Enter TRIP.

Trip. Oh, gentlemen, I beg pardon for not showing you out this way—Moses, a word. [*Exit with* MOSES.

Sir Oliv. There's a fellow for you! Would you believe it, that puppy intercepted the Jew on our coming, and wanted to raise money before he got to his master!

Row. Indeed!

Sir Oliv. Yes, they are now planning an annuity business. Ah, Master Rowley, in my days servants were content with the follies of their masters, when they were worn a little threadbare; but now they have their vices, like their birthday clothes, with the gloss on. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Library in* JOSEPH SURFACE'S *House.*

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE *and* SERVANT.

Jos. Surf. No letter from Lady Teazle?

Ser. No, sir.

Jos. Surf. [*Aside.*] I am surprised she has not sent, if she is prevented from coming. Sir Peter certainly does not suspect me. Yet I wish I may not lose the heiress, through the scrape I have drawn myself into with the wife; however, Charles's imprudence and bad character are great points in my favour.

[*Knocking without.*

Ser. Sir, I believe that must be Lady Teazle.

Jos. Surf. Hold! See whether it is or not, before you go to the door: I have a particular message for you if it should be my brother.

Ser. 'Tis her ladyship, sir; she always leaves her chair at the milliner's in the next street.

Jos. Surf. Stay, stay: draw that screen before the window—that will do;—my opposite neighbour is a maiden lady of so curious a temper.—[SERVANT *draws the screen, and exit.*] I have a difficult hand to play in this affair. Lady Teazle has lately suspected my views on Maria; but she must by no means be let into that secret,—at least, till I have her more in my power.

Enter LADY TEAZLE.

Lady Teaz. What, sentiment in soliloquy now? Have you been very impatient? O Lud! don't pretend to look grave. I vow I couldn't come before.

Jos. Surf. O madam, punctuality is a species of constancy very unfashionable in a lady of quality.

[*Places chairs and sits after* LADY TEAZLE *is seated.*

Lady Teaz. Upon my word, you ought to pity me. Do you know Sir Peter is grown so ill-natured to me of late, and so jealous of Charles too—that's the best of the story isn't it?

Jos. Surf. I am glad my scandalous friends keep that up. [*Aside.*

Lady Teaz. I am sure I wish he would let Maria marry him, and then perhaps he would be convinced; don't you, Mr. Surface?

Jos. Surf. [*Aside.*] Indeed I do not.—[*Aloud.*] Oh, certainly I do! for then my dear Lady Teazle would also be convinced how wrong her suspicions were of my having any design on the silly girl.

Lady Teaz. Well, well, I'm inclined to believe you. But isn't it provoking, to have the most ill-natured things said of one? And there's my friend Lady Sneerwell has circulated I don't know how many scandalous tales of me, and all without any foundation too; that's what vexes me.

Jos. Surf. Ay, madam, to be sure, that is the provoking circumstance—without foundation; yes, yes, there's the mortification, indeed; for, when a scandalous story is believed against one, there certainly is no comfort like the consciousness of having deserved it.

Lady Teaz. No, to be sure, then I'd forgive their malice; but to attack me, who am really so innocent, and who never say an ill-natured thing of anybody—that is, of any friend; and then Sir Peter, too, to have him so peevish, and so suspicious, when I know the integrity of my own heart—indeed 'tis monstrous!

Jos. Surf. But, my dear Lady Teazle, 'tis your own fault if you suffer it. When a husband entertains a groundless suspicion of his wife, and withdraws his confidence from her, the original compact is broken, and she owes it to the honour of her sex to endeavour to outwit him.

Lady Teaz. Indeed! So that, if he suspects me without cause, it follows, that the best way of curing his jealousy is to give him reason for't?

Jos. Surf. Undoubtedly—for your husband should never be

deceived in you: and in that case it becomes you to be frail in compliment to his discernment.

Lady Teaz. To be sure, what you say is very reasonable, and when the consciousness of my innocence——

Jos. Surf. Ah, my dear madam, there is the great mistake! 'tis this very conscious innocence that is of the greatest prejudice to you. What is it makes you negligent of forms, and careless of the world's opinion? why the consciousness of your own innocence. What makes you thoughtless in your conduct, and apt to run into a thousand little imprudences? why, the consciousness of your own innocence. What makes you impatient of Sir Peter's temper, and outrageous at his suspicions? why the consciousness of your innocence.

Lady Teaz. 'Tis very true!

Jos. Surf. Now, my dear Lady Teazle, if you would but once make a trifling *faux pas*, you can't conceive how cautious you would grow, and how ready to humour and agree with your husband.

Lady Teaz. Do you think so?

Jos. Surf. Oh, I'm sure on't; and then you would find all scandal would cease at once, for—in short, your character at present is like a person in a plethora, absolutely dying from too much health.

Lady Teaz. So, so; then I perceive your prescription is, that I must sin in my own defence, and part with my virtue to preserve my reputation?

Jos. Surf. Exactly so, upon my credit, ma'am.

Lady Teaz. Well, certainly this is the oddest doctrine, and the newest receipt for avoiding calumny!

Jos. Surf. An infallible one, believe me. Prudence, like experience, must be paid for.

Lady Teaz. Why, if my understanding were once convinced

Jos. Surf. Oh, certainly, madam, your understanding should be convinced. Yes, yes—Heaven forbid I should persuade you to do anything you thought wrong. No, no, I have too much honour to desire it.

Lady Teaz. Don't you think we may as well leave honour out of the argument? [*Rises.*

Jos. Surf. Ah, the ill effects of your country education, I see, still remain with you.

Lady Teaz. I doubt they do indeed; and I will fairly own to you, that if I could be persuaded to do wrong, it would be by Sir Peter's ill-usage sooner than your honourable logic, after all.

Jos. Surf. Then, by this hand, which he is unworthy of—— [*Taking her hand.*

Re-enter SERVANT.

'Sdeath, you blockhead—what do you want?

Ser. I beg your pardon, sir, but I thought you would not choose Sir Peter to come up without announcing him.

Jos. Surf. Sir Peter!—Oons—the devil!

Lady Teas. Sir Peter! O Lud! I'm ruined! I'm ruined!

Ser. Sir, 'twasn't I let him in.

Lady Teas. Oh! I'm quite undone! What will become of me? Now, Mr. Logic—Oh! mercy, sir, he's on the stairs—I'll get behind here—and if ever I'm so imprudent again—— [*Goes behind the screen.*

Jos. Surf. Give me that book. [*Sits down.* SERVANT *pretends to adjust his chair.*

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE.

Sir Pet. Ay, ever improving himself—Mr. Surface, Mr. Surface—— [*Pats* JOSEPH *on the shoulder.*

Jos. Surf. Oh, my dear Sir Peter, I beg your pardon.—[*Gaping, throws away the book.*] I have been dozing over a stupid book. Well, I am much obliged to you for this call. You haven't been here, I believe, since I fitted up this room. Books, you know, are the only things I am a coxcomb in.

Sir Pet. 'Tis very neat indeed. Well, well, that's proper; and you can make even your screen a source of knowledge—hung, I perceive, with maps.

Jos. Surf. Oh, yes, I find great use in that screen.

Sir Pet. I dare say you must, certainly, when you want to find anything in a hurry.

Jos. Surf. Ay, or to hide anything in a hurry either. [*Aside.*

Sir Pet. Well, I have a little private business——

Jos. Surf. You need not stay. [*To* SERVANT.

Ser. No, sir. [*Exit.*

Jos. Surf. Here's a chair, Sir Peter—I beg——

Sir Pet. Well, now we are alone, there is a subject, my dear friend, on which I wish to unburden my mind to you—a point of the greatest moment to my peace; in short, my good friend, Lady Teazle's conduct of late has made me very unhappy.

Jos. Surf. Indeed! I am very sorry to hear it.

Sir Pet. Yes, 'tis but too plain she has not the least regard for me; but, what's worse, I have pretty good authority to suppose she has formed an attachment to another.

Jos. Surf. Indeed! you astonish me!

Sir Pet. Yes! and, between ourselves, I think I've discovered the person.

Jos. Surf. How! you alarm me exceedingly.

Sir Pet. Ay, my dear friend, I knew you would sympathise with me!

Jos. Surf. Yes, believe me, Sir Peter, such a discovery would hurt me just as much as it would you.

Sir Pet. I am convinced of it. Ah! it is a happiness to have a friend whom we can trust even with one's family secrets. But have you no guess who I mean?

Jos. Surf. I haven't the most distant idea. It can't be Sir Benjamin Backbite!

Sir Pet. Oh, no! What say you to Charles?

Jos. Surf. My brother! impossible!

Sir Pet. Oh, my dear friend, the goodness of your own heart misleads you. You judge of others by yourself.

Jos. Surf. Certainly, Sir Peter, the heart that is conscious of its own integrity is ever slow to credit another's treachery.

Sir Pet. True; but your brother has no sentiment—you never hear him talk so.

Jos. Surf. Yet I can't but think Lady Teazle herself has too much principle.

Sir Pet. Ay; but what is principle against the flattery of a handsome, lively young fellow?

Jos. Surf. That's very true.

Sir Pet. And then, you know, the difference of our ages makes it very improbable that she should have any great affection for me; and if she were to be frail, and I were to make it public, why the town would only laugh at me, the foolish old bachelor, who had married a girl.

Jos. Surf. That's true, to be sure—they would laugh.

Sir Pet. Laugh! ay, and make ballads, and paragraphs, and the devil knows what of me.

Jos. Surf. No, you must never make it public.

Sir Pet. But then again—that the nephew of my old friend, Sir Oliver, should be the person to attempt such a wrong, hurts me more nearly.

Jos. Surf. Ay, there's the point. When ingratitude barbs the dart of injury, the wound has double danger in it.

Sir Pet. Ay—I, that was, in a manner, left his guardian: in whose house he had been so often entertained; who never in my life denied him—my advice!

Jos. Surf. Oh, 'tis not to be credited! There may be a man capable of such baseness, to be sure; but, for my part, till you

can give me positive proofs, I cannot but doubt it. However, if it should be proved on him, he is no longer a brother of mine —I disclaim kindred with him: for the man who can break the laws of hospitality, and tempt the wife of his friend, deserves to be branded as the pest of society.

Sir Pet. What a difference there is between you! What noble sentiments!

Jos. Surf. Yet I cannot suspect Lady Teazle's honour.

Sir Pet. I am sure I wish to think well of her, and to remove all ground of quarrel between us. She has lately reproached me more than once with having made no settlement on her; and, in our last quarrel, she almost hinted that she should not break her heart if I was dead. Now, as we seem to differ in our ideas of expense, I have resolved she shall have her own way, and be her own mistress in that respect for the future; and, if I were to die, she will find I have not been inattentive to her interest while living. Here, my friend, are the drafts of two deeds, which I wish to have your opinion on. By one, she will enjoy eight hundred a year independent while I live; and, by the other, the bulk of my fortune at my death.

Jos. Surf. This conduct, Sir Peter, is indeed truly generous. —[*Aside.*] I wish it may not corrupt my pupil.

Sir Pet. Yes, I am determined she shall have no cause to complain, though I would not have her acquainted with the latter instance of my affection yet awhile.

Jos. Surf. Nor I, if I could help it. [*Aside.*

Sir Pet. And now, my dear friend, if you please, we will talk over the situation of your hopes with Maria.

Jos. Surf. [*Softly.*] Oh, no, Sir Peter; another time, if you please.

Sir Pet. I am sensibly chagrined at the little progress you seem to make in her affections.

Jos. Surf. [*Softly.*] I beg you will not mention it. What are my disappointments when your happiness is in debate!— [*Aside.*] 'Sdeath, I shall be ruined every way!

Sir Pet. And though you are averse to my acquainting Lady Teazle with your passion, I'm sure she's not your enemy in the affair.

Jos. Surf. Pray, Sir Peter, now oblige me. I am really too much affected by the subject we have been speaking of to bestow a thought on my own concerns. The man who is entrusted with his friend's distresses can never——

Re-enter SERVANT.

Well, sir?

Ser. Your brother, sir, is speaking to a gentleman in the street, and says he knows you are within.

Jos. Surf. 'Sdeath, blockhead, I'm not within—I'm out for the day.

Sir Pet. Stay—hold—a thought has struck me:—you shall be at home.

Jos. Surf. Well, well, let him up.—[*Exit* SERVANT.] He'll interrupt Sir Peter, however. [*Aside.*

Sir Pet. Now, my good friend, oblige me, I entreat you. Before Charles comes, let me conceal myself somewhere, then do you tax him on the point we have been talking, and his answer may satisfy me at once.

Jos. Surf. Oh, fie, Sir Peter! would you have me join in so mean a trick?—to trepan my brother too?

Sir Pet. Nay, you tell me you are sure he is innocent; if so, you do him the greatest service by giving him an opportunity to clear himself, and you will set my heart at rest. Come, you shall not refuse me: [*Going up*] here, behind the screen will be—Hey! what the devil! there seems to be one listener here already—I'll swear I saw a petticoat!

Jos. Surf. Ha! ha! ha! Well, this is ridiculous enough. I'll tell you, Sir Peter, though I hold a man of intrigue to be a most despicable character, yet, you know, it does not follow that one is to be an absolute Joseph either! Hark'ee, 'tis a little French milliner, a silly rogue that plagues me; and having some character to lose, on your coming, sir, she ran behind the screen.

Sir Pet. Ah, Joseph! Joseph! Did I ever think that you ——But, egad, she has overheard all I have been saying of my wife.

Jos. Surf. Oh, 'twill never go any farther, you may depend upon it!

Sir Pet. No! then, faith, let her hear it out.—Here's a closet will do as well.

Jos. Surf. Well, go in there.

Sir Pet. Sly rogue! sly rogue! [*Goes into the closet.*

Jos. Surf. A narrow escape, indeed! and a curious situation I'm in, to part man and wife in this manner.

Lady Tea. [*Peeping.*] Couldn't I steal off?

Jos. Surf. Keep close, my angel!

Sir Pet. [*Peeping.*] Joseph, tax him home.

Jos. Surf. Back, my dear friend!

Lady Teaz. [*Peeping.*] Couldn't you lock Sir Peter in?

Jos. Surf. Be still, my life!

Sir Pet. [*Peeping.*] You're sure the little milliner won't blab?

Jos. Surf. In, in, my dear Sir Peter!—'Fore Gad, I wish I had a key to the door.

Enter CHARLES SURFACE.

Chas. Surf. Holla! brother, what has been the matter? Your fellow would not let me up at first. What! have you had a Jew or a wench with you?

Jos. Surf. Neither, brother, I assure you.

Chas. Surf. But what has made Sir Peter steal off? I thought he had been with you.

Jos. Surf. He was, brother; but, hearing you were coming, he did not choose to stay.

Chas. Surf. What! was the old gentleman afraid I wanted to borrow money of him?

Jos. Surf. No, sir: but I am sorry to find, Charles, you have lately given that worthy man grounds for great uneasiness.

Chas. Surf. Yes, they tell me I do that to a great many worthy men. But how so, pray?

Jos. Surf. To be plain with you, brother, he thinks you are endeavouring to gain Lady Teazle's affections from him.

Chas. Surf. Who, I? O Lud! not I, upon my word.—Ha! ha! ha! ha! so the old fellow has found out that he has got a young wife, has he?—or, what is worse, Lady Teazle has found out she has an old husband?

Jos. Surf. This is no subject to jest on, brother. He who can laugh——

Chas. Surf. True, true, as you were going to say—then, seriously, I never had the least idea of what you charge me with, upon my honour.

Jos. Surf. Well, it will give Sir Peter great satisfaction to hear this. [*Raising his voice.*

Chas. Surf. To be sure, I once thought the lady seemed to have taken a fancy to me; but, upon my soul, I never gave her the least encouragement. Besides, you know my attachment to Maria.

Jos. Surf. But sure, brother, even if Lady Teazle had betrayed the fondest partiality for you——

Chas. Surf. Why, look'ee, Joseph, I hope I shall never deliberately do a dishonourable action; but if a pretty woman was purposely to throw herself in my way—and that pretty woman married to a man old enough to be her father——

Jos. Surf. Well!

Chas. Surf. Why, I believe I should be obliged to——

Jos. Surf. What?

Chas Surf. To borrow a little of your morality, that's all. But, brother, do you know now that you surprise me exceedingly, by naming me with Lady Teazle; for, i'faith, I always understood you were her favourite.

Jos. Surf. Oh, for shame, Charles! This retort is foolish.

Chas. Surf. Nay, I swear I have seen you exchange such significant glances——

Jos. Surf. Nay, nay, sir, this is no jest.

Chas. Surf. Egad, I'm serious! Don't you remember one day, when I called here——

Jos. Surf. Nay, p'rythee, Charles——

Chas. Surf. And found you together——

Jos. Surf. Zounds, sir, I insist——

Chas. Surf. And another time when your servant——

Jos. Surf. Brother, brother, a word with you!—[*Aside.*] Gad, I must stop him.

Chas. Surf. Informed, I say, that——

Jos. Surf. Hush! I beg your pardon, but Sir Peter has overheard all we have been saying. I knew you would clear yourself, or I should not have consented.

Chas. Surf. How Sir Peter! Where is he?

Jos. Surf. Softly, there! [*Points to the closet.*

Chas. Surf. Oh, 'fore Heaven, I'll have him out. Sir Peter, come forth!

Jos. Surf. No, no——

Chas. Surf. I say, Sir Peter, come into court.—[*Pulls in* SIR PETER.] What! my old guardian!—What!—turn inquisitor, and take evidence incog.? Oh, fie! Oh, fie!

Sir Pet. Give me your hand, Charles—I believe I have suspected you wrongfully; but you mustn't be angry with Joseph —'twas my plan!

Chas. Surf. Indeed!

Sir Pet. But I acquit you. I promise you I don't think near so ill of you as I did: what I have heard has given me great satisfaction.

Chas. Surf. Egad, then, 'twas lucky you didn't hear any more. Wasn't it, Joseph?

Sir Pet. Ah! you would have retorted on him.

Chas. Surf. Ah, ay, that was a joke.

Sir Pet. Yes, yes, I know his honour too well.

Chas. Surf. But you might as well have suspected him as me in this matter, for all that. Mightn't he, Joseph?

Sir Pet. Well, well, I believe you.

Jos. Surf. Would they were both out of the room! [*Aside.*

Sir Pet. And in future, perhaps, we may not be such strangers

Re-enter SERVANT, *and whispers* JOSEPH SURFACE.

Serv. Lady Sneerwell is below, and says she will come up.

Jos. Surf. Lady Sneerwell! Gad's life! she must not come here. [*Exit* SERVANT.] Gentlemen, I beg pardon—I must wait on you downstairs: here is a person come on particular business.

Chas. Surf. Well, you can see him in another room. Sir Peter and I have not met a long time, and I have something to say to him.

Jos. Surf. [*Aside.*] They must not be left together.—[*Aloud.*] I'll send Lady Sneerwell away, and return directly.—[*Aside to* SIR PETER.] Sir Peter, not a word of the French milliner.

Sir Pet. [*Aside to* JOSEPH SURFACE.] I! not for the world! —[*Exit* JOSEPH SURFACE.] Ah, Charles, if you associated more with your brother, one might indeed hope for your reformation. He is a man of sentiment. Well, there is nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment.

Chas. Surf. Psha! he is too moral by half; and so apprehensive of his good name, as he calls it, that I suppose he would as soon let a priest into his house as a wench.

Sir. Pet. No, no,—come, come,—you wrong him. No, no, Joseph is no rake, but he is no such saint either, in that respect. —[*Aside.*] I have a great mind to tell him—we should have such a laugh at Joseph.

Chas. Surf. Oh, hang him! he's a very anchorite, a young hermit!

Sir Pet. Hark'ee—you must not abuse him: he may chance to hear of it again, I promise you.

Chas Surf. Why, you won't tell him?

Sir Pet. No—but—this way.—[*Aside.*] Egad, I'll tell him. —[*Aloud.*] Hark'ee—have you a mind to have a good laugh at Joseph?

Chas. Surf. I should like it of all things.

Sir Pet. Then, i'faith, we will! I'll be quit with him for discovering me. He had a girl with him when I called. [*Whispers.*

Chas. Surf. What! Joseph? you jest.

Sir Pet. Hush!—a little French milliner—and the best of the jest is—she's in the room now.

Chas. Surf. The devil she is!
Sir Pet. Hush! I tell you. [*Points to the screen.*
Chas. Surf. Behind the screen! 'Slife, let's unveil her!
Sir Pet. No, no, he's coming:—you shan't, indeed!
Chas. Surf. Oh, egad, we'll have a peep at the little milliner!
Sir Pet. Not for the world!—Joseph will never forgive me.
Chas. Surf. I'll stand by you——
Sir Pet. Odds, here he is!
[CHARLES SURFACE *throws down the screen.*

Re-enter JOSEPH SURFACE.

Chas. Surf. Lady Teazle, by all that's wonderful!
Sir Pet. Lady Teazle, by all that's damnable!
Chas. Surf. Sir Peter, this is one of the smartest French milliners I ever saw. Egad, you seem all to have been diverting yourselves here at hide and seek, and I don't see who is out of the secret. Shall I beg your ladyship to inform me? Not a word!—Brother, will you be pleased to explain this matter? What! is Morality dumb too?—Sir Peter, though I found you in the dark, perhaps you are not so now! All mute! —Well—though I can make nothing of the affair, I suppose you perfectly understand one another; so I'll leave you to yourselves.—[*Going.*] Brother, I'm sorry to find you have given that worthy man grounds for so much uneasiness.—Sir Peter! there's nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment!
[*Exit.*
Jos. Surf. Sir Peter—notwithstanding—I confess—that appearances are against me—if you will afford me your patience —I make no doubt—but I shall explain everything to your satisfaction.
Sir Pet. If you please, sir.
Jos. Surf. The fact is, sir, that Lady Teazle, knowing my pretensions to your ward Maria—I say, sir, Lady Teazle, being apprehensive of the jealousy of your temper—and knowing my friendship to the family—she, sir, I say—called here—in order that—I might explain these pretensions—but on your coming —being apprehensive—as I said—of your jealousy—she withdrew—and this, you may depend on it, is the whole truth of the matter.
Sir Pet. A very clear account, upon my word; and I dare swear the lady will vouch for every article of it.
Lady Teaz. For not one word of it, Sir Peter!
Sir Pet. How! don't you think it worth while to agree in the lie?

Lady Teaz. There is not one syllable of truth in what that gentleman has told you.

Sir Pet. I believe you, upon my soul, ma'am!

Jos. Surf. [*Aside to* LADY TEAZLE.] 'Sdeath, madam, will you betray me?

Lady Teaz. Good Mr. Hypocrite, by your leave, I'll speak for myself.

Sir Pet. Ay, let her alone, sir; you'll find she'll make out a better story than you, without prompting.

Lady Teaz. Hear me, Sir Peter!—I came here on no matter relating to your ward, and even ignorant of this gentleman's pretensions to her. But I came, seduced by his insidious arguments, at least to listen to his pretended passion, if not to sacrifice your honour to his baseness.

Sir Pet. Now, I believe, the truth is coming, indeed!

Jos. Surf. The woman's mad!

Lady Teaz. No, sir; she has recovered her senses, and your own arts have furnished her with the means.—Sir Peter, I do not expect you to credit me—but the tenderness you expressed for me, when I am sure you could not think I was a witness to it, has so penetrated to my heart, that had I left the place without the shame of this discovery, my future life should have spoken the sincerity of my gratitude. As for that smooth-tongued hypocrite, who would have seduced the wife of his too credulous friend, while he affected honourable addresses to his ward—I behold him now in a light so truly despicable, that I shall never again respect myself for having listened to him.

[*Exit.*

Jos. Surf. Notwithstanding all this, Sir Peter, Heaven knows

Sir Pet. That you are a villain! and so I leave you to your conscience.

Jos. Surf. You are too rash, Sir Peter; you shall hear me. The man who shuts out conviction by refusing to——

Sir Pet. Oh, damn your sentiments!

[*Exeunt* SIR PETER *and* JOSEPH SURFACE, *talking.*

ACT. V.

SCENE I.—*The Library in* JOSEPH SURFACE'S *House.*

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE *and* SERVANT.

Jos. Surf. Mr. Stanley! and why should you think I would see him? you must know he comes to ask something.

Ser. Sir, I should not have let him in, but that Mr. Rowley came to the door with him.

Jos. Surf. Psha! blockhead! to suppose that I should now be in a temper to receive visits from poor relations!—Well, why don't you show the fellow up?

Ser. I will, sir.—Why, sir, it was not my fault that Sir Peter discovered my lady——

Jos. Surf. Go, fool!—[*Exit* SERVANT.] Sure Fortune never played a man of my policy such a trick before! My character with Sir Peter, my hopes with Maria, destroyed in a moment! I'm in a rare humour to listen to other people's distresses! I shan't be able to bestow even a benevolent sentiment on Stanley.—So! here he comes, and Rowley with him. I must try to recover myself, and put a little charity into my face, however. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE *and* ROWLEY.

Sir Oliv. What! does he avoid us? That was he, was it not?

Row. It was, sir. But I doubt you are come a little too abruptly. His nerves are so weak, that the sight of a poor relation may be too much for him. I should have gone first to break it to him.

Sir Oliv. Oh, plague of his nerves! Yet this is he whom Sir Peter extols as a man of the most benevolent way of thinking!

Row. As to his way of thinking, I cannot pretend to decide; for, to do him justice, he appears to have as much speculative benevolence as any private gentleman in the kingdom, though he is seldom so sensual as to indulge himself in the exercise of it.

Sir Oliv. Yet he has a string of charitable sentiments at his fingers' ends.

Row. Or, rather, at his tongue's end, Sir Oliver; for I believe there is no sentiment he has such faith in as that *Charity begins at home.*

Sir Oliv. And his, I presume, is of that domestic sort which never stirs abroad at all.

Row. I doubt you'll find it so;—but he's coming. I mustn't seem to interrupt you; and you know, immediately as you leave him, I come in to announce your arrival in your real character.

Sir Oliv. True; and afterwards you'll meet me at Sir Peter's.

Row. Without losing a moment. [*Exit.*

Sir Oliv. I don't like the complaisance of his features.

Re-enter JOSEPH SURFACE.

Jos. Surf. Sir, I beg you ten thousand pardons for keeping you a moment waiting.—Mr. Stanley, I presume.

Sir Oliv. At your service.

Jos. Surf. Sir, I beg you will do me the honour to sit down—I entreat you, sir.

Sir Oliv. Dear sir—there's no occasion.—[*Aside.*] Too civil by half!

Jos. Surf. I have not the pleasure of knowing you, Mr. Stanley; but I am extremely happy to see you look so well. You were nearly related to my mother, I think, Mr. Stanley?

Sir Oliv. I was, sir; so nearly that my present poverty, I fear, may do discredit to her wealthy children, else I should not have presumed to trouble you.

Jos. Surf. Dear sir, there needs no apology:—he that is in distress, though a stranger, has a right to claim kindred with the wealthy. I am sure I wish I was one of that class, and had it in my power to offer you even a small relief.

Sir Oliv. If your uncle, Sir Oliver, were here, I should have a friend.

Jos. Surf. I wish he was, sir, with all my heart: you should not want an advocate with him, believe me, sir.

Sir Oliv. I should not need one—my distresses would recommend me. But I imagined his bounty would enable you to become the agent of his charity.

Jos. Surf. My dear sir, you were strangely misinformed. Sir Oliver is a worthy man, a very worthy man; but avarice, Mr. Stanley, is the vice of age. I will tell you, my good sir, in confidence, what he has done for me has been a mere nothing; though people, I know, have thought otherwise, and, for my part, I never chose to contradict the report.

Sir Oliv. What! has he never transmitted you bullion—rupees—pagodas?

Jos. Surf. Oh, dear sir, nothing of the kind! No, no; a few presents now and then—china, shawls, congou tea, avadavats, and Indian crackers—little more, believe me.

Sir Oliv. Here's gratitude for twelve thousand pounds!—Avadavats and Indian crackers! [*Aside.*

Jos. Surf. Then, my dear sir, you have heard, I doubt not, of the extravagance of my brother; there are very few would credit what I have done for that unfortunate young man.

Sir Oliv. Not I, for one! [*Aside.*

Jos. Surf. The sums I have lent him! Indeed I have been

exceedingly to blame; it was an amiable weakness; however, I don't pretend to defend it—and now I feel it doubly culpable, since it has deprived me of the pleasure of serving you, Mr. Stanley, as my heart dictates.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] Dissembler!—[*Aloud.*] Then, sir, you can't assist me?

Jos. Surf. At present, it grieves me to say, I cannot; but, whenever I have the ability, you may depend upon hearing from me.

Sir Oliv. I am extremely sorry——

Jos. Surf. Not more than I, believe me; to pity, without the power to relieve, is still more painful than to ask and be denied.

Sir Oliv. Kind sir, your most obedient humble servant.

Jos. Surf. You leave me deeply affected, Mr. Stanley.—William, be ready to open the door. [*Calls to* SERVANT.

Sir Oliv. Oh, dear sir, no ceremony.

Jos. Surf. Your very obedient.

Sir Oliv. Your most obsequious.

Jos. Surf. You may depend upon hearing from me, whenever I can be of service.

Sir Oliv. Sweet sir, you are too good!

Jos. Surf. In the meantime I wish you health and spirits.

Sir Oliv. Your ever grateful and perpetual humble servant.

Jos. Surf. Sir, yours as sincerely.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] Now I am satisfied. [*Exit.*

Jos. Surf. This is one bad effect of a good character; it invites application from the unfortunate, and there needs no small degree of address to gain the reputation of benevolence without incurring the expense. The silver ore of pure charity is an expensive article in the catalogue of a man's good qualities; whereas the sentimental French plate I use instead of it makes just as good a show, and pays no tax.

Re-enter ROWLEY.

Row. Mr. Surface, your servant: I was apprehensive of interrupting you, though my business demands immediate attention, as this note will inform you.

Jos. Surf. Always happy to see Mr. Rowley,—a rascal.—[*Aside. Reads the letter.*] Sir Oliver Surface!—My uncle arrived!

Row. He is, indeed: we have just parted—quite well, after a speedy voyage, and impatient to embrace his worthy nephew.

Jos. Surf. I am astonished!—William! stop Mr. Stanley, if he's not gone. [*Calls to* SERVANT.

Row. Oh! he's out of reach, I believe.

Jos. Surf. Why did you not let me know this when you came in together?

Row. I thought you had particular business. But I must be gone to inform your brother, and appoint him here to meet your uncle. He will be with you in a quarter of an hour.

Jos. Surf. So he says. Well, I am strangely overjoyed at his coming.—[*Aside.*] Never, to be sure, was anything so damned unlucky!

Row. You will be delighted to see how well he looks.

Jos. Surf. Oh! I'm overjoyed to hear it.—[*Aside.*] Just at this time!

Row. I'll tell him how impatiently you expect him.

Jos. Surf. Do, do; pray give my best duty and affection. Indeed, I cannot express the sensations I feel at the thought of seeing him.—[*Exit* ROWLEY.] Certainly his coming just at this time is the cruellest piece of ill fortune. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* SIR PETER TEAZLE'S *House.*

Enter MRS. CANDOUR *and* MAID.

Maid. Indeed, ma'am, my lady will see nobody at present.

Mrs. Can. Did you tell her it was her friend Mrs. Candour?

Maid. Yes, ma'am; but she begs you will excuse her.

Mrs. Can. Do go again; I shall be glad to see her, if it be only for a moment, for I am sure she must be in great distress. —[*Exit* MAID.] Dear heart, how provoking! I'm not mistress of half the circumstances! We shall have the whole affair in the newspapers, with the names of the parties at length, before I have dropped the story at a dozen houses.

Enter SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE.

Oh, dear Sir Benjamin! you have heard, I suppose——

Sir Ben. Of Lady Teazle and Mr. Surface——

Mrs. Can. And Sir Peter's discovery——

Sir Ben. Oh, the strangest piece of business, to be sure!

Mrs. Can. Well, I never was so surprised in my life. I am so sorry for all parties, indeed.

Sir Ben. Now, I don't pity Sir Peter at all: he was so extravagantly partial to Mr. Surface.

Mrs. Can. Mr. Surface! Why, 'twas with Charles Lady Teazle was detected.

Sir Ben. No, no, I tell you : Mr. Surface is the gallant.

Mrs. Can. No such thing ! Charles is the man. 'Twas Mr. Surface brought Sir Peter on purpose to discover them.

Sir Ben. I tell you I had it from one——

Mrs. Can. And I have it from one——

Sir Ben. Who had it from one, who had it——

Mrs. Can. From one immediately. But here comes Lady Sneerwell ; perhaps she knows the whole affair.

Enter LADY SNEERWELL.

Lady Sneer. So, my dear Mrs. Candour, here's a sad affair of our friend Lady Teazle !

Mrs. Can. Ay, my dear friend, who would have thought——

Lady Sneer. Well, there is no trusting appearances ; though, indeed, she was always too lively for me.

Mrs. Can. To be sure, her manners were a little too free ; but then she was so young !

Lady Sneer. And had, indeed, some good qualities.

Mrs. Can. So she had, indeed. But have you heard the particulars ?

Lady Sneer. No ; but everybody says that Mr. Surface——

Sir Ben. Ay, there ; I told you Mr. Surface was the man.

Mrs. Can. No, no : indeed the assignation was with Charles.

Lady Sneer. With Charles ! You alarm me, Mrs. Candour !

Mrs. Can. Yes, yes ; he was the lover. Mr. Surface, to do him justice, was only the informer.

Sir Ben. Well, I'll not dispute with you, Mrs. Candour ; but, be it which it may, I hope that Sir Peter's wound will not——

Mrs. Can. Sir Peter's wound ! Oh, mercy ! I didn't hear a word of their fighting.

Lady Sneer. Nor I, a syllable.

Sir Ben. No ! what, no mention of the duel ?

Mrs. Can. Not a word.

Sir Ben. Oh, yes : they fought before they left the room.

Lady Sneer. Pray, let us hear.

Mrs. Can. Ay, do oblige us with the duel.

Sir Ben. "*Sir*," says Sir Peter, immediately after the discovery, "*you are a most ungrateful fellow.*"

Mrs. Can. Ay, to Charles——

Sir Ben. No, no—to Mr. Surface—"*a most ungrateful fellow ; and old as I am, sir*," says he, "*I insist on immediate satisfaction.*"

Mrs. Can. Ay, that must have been to Charles ; for 'tis very unlikely Mr. Surface should fight in his own house.

Sir Ben. Gad's life, ma'am, not at all—"*giving me immediate satisfaction.*"—On this, ma'am, Lady Teazle, seeing Sir Peter in such danger, ran out of the room in strong hysterics, and Charles after her, calling out for hartshorn and water; then, madam, they began to fight with swords——

Enter CRABTREE.

Crab. With pistols, nephew—pistols! I have it from undoubted authority.

Mrs. Can. Oh, Mr. Crabtree, then it is all true!

Crab. Too true, indeed, madam, and Sir Peter is dangerously wounded——

Sir Ben. By a thrust in segoon quite through his left side——

Crab. By a bullet lodged in the thorax.

Mrs. Can. Mercy on me! Poor Sir Peter!

Crab. Yes, madam; though Charles would have avoided the matter, if he could.

Mrs. Can. I told you who it was; I knew Charles was the person.

Sir Ben. My uncle, I see, knows nothing of the matter.

Crab. But Sir Peter taxed him with the basest ingratitude——

Sir Ben. That I told you, you know——

Crab. Do, nephew, let me speak!—and insisted on immediate——

Sir Ben. Just as I said——

Crab. Odds life, nephew, allow others to know something too! A pair of pistols lay on the bureau (for Mr. Surface, it seems, had come home the night before late from Salthill, where he had been to see the Montem with a friend, who has a son at Eton), so, unluckily, the pistols were left charged.

Sir Ben. I heard nothing of this.

Crab. Sir Peter forced Charles to take one, and they fired, it seems, pretty nearly together. Charles's shot took effect, as I tell you, and Sir Peter's missed; but, what is very extraordinary, the ball struck against a little bronze Shakspeare that stood over the fire-place, glanced out of the window at a right angle, and wounded the postman, who was just coming to the door with a double letter from Northamptonshire.

Sir Ben. My uncle's account is more circumstantial, I confess; but I believe mine is the true one, for all that.

Lady Sneer. [*Aside.*] I am more interested in this affair than they imagine, and must have better information. [*Exit.*

Sir Ben. Ah! Lady Sneerwell's alarm is very easily accounted for.

Crab. Yes, yes, they certainly do say—but that's neither here nor there.

Mrs. Can. But, pray, where is Sir Peter at present?

Crab. Oh! they brought him home, and he is now in the house, though the servants are ordered to deny him.

Mrs. Can. I believe so, and Lady Teazle, I suppose, attending him.

Crab. Yes, yes; and I saw one of the faculty enter just before me.

Sir Ben. Hey! who comes here?

Crab. Oh, this is he: the physician, depend on't.

Mrs. Can. Oh, certainly! it must be the physician; and now we shall know.

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE.

Crab. Well, doctor, what hopes?

Mrs. Can. Ay, doctor, how's your patient?

Sir Ben. Now, doctor, isn't it a wound with a small-sword?

Crab. A bullet lodged in the thorax, for a hundred!

Sir Oliv. Doctor! a wound with a small-sword! and a bullet in the thorax!—Oons! are you mad, good people?

Sir Ben. Perhaps, sir, you are not a doctor?

Sir Oliv. Truly, I am to thank you for my degree, if I am.

Crab. Only a friend of Sir Peter's, then, I presume. But, sir, you must have heard of his accident?

Sir Oliv. Not a word!

Crab. Not of his being dangerously wounded?

Sir Oliv. The devil he is!

Sir Ben. Run through the body——

Crab. Shot in the breast——

Sir Ben. By one Mr. Surface——

Crab. Ay, the younger.

Sir Oliv. Hey! what the plague! you seem to differ strangely in your accounts: however, you agree that Sir Peter is dangerously wounded.

Sir Ben. Oh, yes, we agree in that.

Crab. Yes, yes, I believe there can be no doubt in that.

Sir Oliv. Then, upon my word, for a person in that situation, he is the most imprudent man alive; for here he comes, walking as if nothing at all was the matter.

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE.

Odds heart, Sir Peter! you are come in good time, I promise you; for we had just given you over!

Sir Ben. [*Aside to* CRABTREE.] Egad, uncle, this is the most sudden recovery!

Sir Oliv. Why, man! what do you do out of bed with a small-sword through your body, and a bullet lodged in your thorax?

Sir Pet. A small-sword and a bullet!

Sir Oliv. Ay; these gentlemen would have killed you without law or physic, and wanted to dub me a doctor, to make me an accomplice.

Sir Pet. Why, what is all this?

Sir Ben. We rejoice, Sir Peter, that the story of the duel is not true, and are sincerely sorry for your other misfortune.

Sir Pet. So, so; all over the town already! [*Aside.*

Crab. Though, Sir Peter, you were certainly vastly to blame to marry at your years.

Sir Pet. Sir, what business is that of yours?

Mrs. Can. Though, indeed, as Sir Peter made so good a husband, he's very much to be pitied.

Sir Pet. Plague on your pity, ma'am! I desire none of it.

Sir Ben. However, Sir Peter, you must not mind the laughing and jests you will meet with on the occasion.

Sir Pet. Sir, sir! I desire to be master in my own house.

Crab. 'Tis no uncommon case, that's one comfort.

Sir Pet. I insist on being left to myself: without ceremony, I insist on your leaving my house directly!

Mrs. Can. Well, well, we are going; and depend on't, we'll make the best report of it we can. [*Exit.*

Sir Pet. Leave my house!

Crab. And tell how hardly you've been treated. [*Exit.*

Sir Pet. Leave my house!

Sir Ben. And how patiently you bear it. [*Exit.*

Sir Pet. Friends! vipers! furies! Oh! that their own venom would choke them!

Sir Oliv. They are very provoking indeed, Sir Peter.

Enter ROWLEY.

Row. I heard high words: what has ruffled you, sir?

Sir Pet. Psha! what signifies asking? Do I ever pass a day without my vexations?

Row. Well, I'm not inquisitive.

Sir Oliv. Well, Sir Peter, I have seen both my nephews in the manner we proposed.

Sir Pet. A precious couple they are!

Row. Yes, and Sir Oliver is convinced that your judgment was right, Sir Peter.

Sir Oliv. Yes, I find Joseph is indeed the man, after all.

Row. Ay, as Sir Peter says, he is a man of sentiment.

Sir Oliv. And acts up to the sentiments he professes.

Row. It certainly is edification to hear him talk.

Sir Oliv. Oh, he's a model for the young men of the age! But how's this, Sir Peter? you don't join us in your friend Joseph's praise, as I expected.

Sir Pet. Sir Oliver, we live in a damned wicked world, and the fewer we praise the better.

Row. What! do you say so, Sir Peter, who were never mistaken in your life?

Sir Pet. Psha! plague on you both! I see by your sneering you have heard the whole affair. I shall go mad among you!

Row. Then, to fret you no longer, Sir Peter, we are indeed acquainted with it all. I met Lady Teazle coming from Mr. Surface's so humbled, that she deigned to request me to be her advocate with you.

Sir Pet. And does Sir Oliver know all this?

Sir Oliv. Every circumstance.

Sir Pet. What, of the closet and the screen, hey?

Sir Oliv. Yes, yes, and the little French milliner. Oh, I have been vastly diverted with the story! ha! ha! ha!

Sir Pet. 'Twas very pleasant.

Sir Oliv. I never laughed more in my life, I assure you: ha! ha! ha!

Sir Pet. Oh, vastly diverting! ha! ha! ha!

Row. To be sure, Joseph with his sentiments! ha! ha! ha.

Sir Pet. Yes, his sentiments! ha! ha! ha! Hypocritical villain!

Sir Oliv. Ay, and that rogue Charles to pull Sir Peter out of the closet: ha! ha! ha!

Sir Pet. Ha! ha! 'twas devilish entertaining, to be sure!

Sir Oliv. Ha! ha! ha! Egad, Sir Peter, I should like to have seen your face when the screen was thrown down: ha! ha!

Sir Pet. Yes, yes, my face when the screen was thrown down: ha! ha! ha! Oh, I must never show my head again!

Sir Oliv. But come, come, it isn't fair to laugh at you neither, my old friend; though, upon my soul, I can't help it.

Sir Pet. Oh, pray don't restrain your mirth on my account: it does not hurt me at all! I laugh at the whole affair myself. Yes, yes, I think being a standing jest for all one's acquaintance a very happy situation. Oh, yes, and then of a morning to read the paragraphs about Mr. S——, Lady T——, and Sir P——, will be so entertaining!

Row. Without affectation, Sir Peter, you may despise the ridicule of fools. But I see Lady Teazle going towards the next room; I am sure you must desire a reconciliation as earnestly as she does.

Sir Oliv. Perhaps my being here prevents her coming to you. Well, I'll leave honest Rowley to mediate between you; but he must bring you all presently to Mr. Surface's, where I am now returning, if not to reclaim a libertine, at least to expose hypocrisy.

Sir Pet. Ah, I'll be present at your discovering yourself there with all my heart; though 'tis a vile unlucky place for discoveries.

Row. We'll follow. [*Exit* SIR OLIVER SURFACE.

Sir Pet. She is not coming here, you see, Rowley.

Row. No, but she has left the door of that room open, you perceive. See, she is in tears.

Sir Pet. Certainly a little mortification appears very becoming in a wife. Don't you think it will do her good to let her pine a little?

Row. Oh, this is ungenerous in you!

Sir Pet. Well, I know not what to think. You remember the letter I found of hers evidently intended for Charles?

Row. A mere forgery, Sir Peter! laid in your way on purpose. This is one of the points which I intend Snake shall give you conviction of.

Sir Pet. I wish I were once satisfied of that. She looks this way. What a remarkably elegant turn of the head she has. Rowley, I'll go to her.

Row. Certainly.

Sir Pet. Though, when it is known that we are reconciled, people will laugh at me ten times more.

Row. Let them laugh, and retort their malice only by showing them you are happy in spite of it.

Sir Pet. I'faith, so I will! and, if I'm not mistaken, we may yet be the happiest couple in the country.

Row. Nay, Sir Peter, he who once lays aside suspicion——

Sir Pet. Hold, Master Rowley! if you have any regard for me, never let me hear you utter anything like a sentiment: I have had enough of them to serve me the rest of my life.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*The Library in* JOSEPH SURFACE'S *House.*

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE *and* LADY SNEERWELL.

Lady Sneer. Impossible! Will not Sir Peter immediately be

reconciled to Charles, and of course no longer oppose his union with Maria? The thought is distraction to me.

Jos. Surf. Can passion furnish a remedy?

Lady Sneer. No, nor cunning either. Oh, I was a fool, an idiot, to league with such a blunderer!

Jos. Surf. Sure, Lady Sneerwell, I am the greatest sufferer; yet you see I bear the accident with calmness.

Lady Sneer. Because the disappointment doesn't reach your heart; your interest only attached you to Maria. Had you felt for her what I have for that ungrateful libertine, neither your temper nor hypocrisy could prevent your showing the sharpness of your vexation.

Jos. Surf. But why should your reproaches fall on me for this disappointment?

Lady Sneer. Are you not the cause of it? Had you not a sufficient field for your roguery in imposing upon Sir Peter, and supplanting your brother, but you must endeavour to seduce his wife? I hate such an avarice of crimes; 'tis an unfair monopoly, and never prospers.

Jos. Surf. Well, I admit I have been to blame. I confess I deviated from the direct road of wrong, but I don't think we're so totally defeated either.

Lady Sneer. No!

Jos. Surf. You tell me you have made a trial of Snake since we met, and that you still believe him faithful to us?

Lady Sneer. I do believe so.

Jos. Surf. And that he has undertaken, should it be necessary, to swear and prove, that Charles is at this time contracted by vows and honour to your ladyship, which some of his former letters to you will serve to support?

Lady Sneer. This, indeed, might have assisted.

Jos. Surf. Come, come; it is not too late yet.—[*Knocking at the door.*] But hark! this is probably my uncle, Sir Oliver: retire to that room; we'll consult further when he is gone.

Lady Sneer. Well, but if he should find you out too.

Jos. Surf. Oh, I have no fear of that. Sir Peter will hold his tongue for his own credit's sake—and you may depend on it I shall soon discover Sir Oliver's weak side!

Lady Sneer. I have no diffidence of your abilities: only be constant to one roguery at a time.

Jos. Surf. I will, I will!—[*Exit* LADY SNEERWELL.] So! 'tis confounded hard, after such bad fortune, to be baited by one's confederate in evil. Well, at all events, my character is so much better than Charles's, that I certainly—hey!—what

—this is not Sir Oliver, but old Stanley again. Plague on't that he should return to tease me just now! I shall have Sir Oliver come and find him here—and——

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE.

Gad's life, Mr. Stanley, why have you come back to plague me at this time? You must not stay now, upon my word.

Sir Oliv. Sir, I hear your uncle Oliver is expected here, and though he has been so penurious to you, I'll try what he'll do for me.

Jos. Surf. Sir, 'tis impossible for you to stay now, so I must beg——Come any other time, and I promise you, you shall be assisted.

Sir Oliv. No: Sir Oliver and I must be acquainted.

Jos. Surf. Zounds, sir! then I insist on your quitting the room directly.

Sir Oliv. Nay, sir——

Jos. Surf. Sir, I insist on't!—Here, William! show this gentleman out. Since you compel me, sir, not one moment—this is such insolence. [*Going to push him out.*

Enter CHARLES SURFACE.

Chas. Surf. Heyday! what's the matter now? What the devil, have you got hold of my little broker here? Zounds, brother, don't hurt little Premium. What's the matter, my little fellow?

Jos. Surf. So! he has been with you, too, has he?

Chas. Surf. To be sure he has. Why, he's as honest a little——But sure, Joseph, you have not been borrowing money too, have you?

Jos. Surf. Borrowing! no! But, brother, you know we expect Sir Oliver here every——

Chas. Surf. O Gad, that's true! Noll mustn't find the little broker here, to be sure.

Jos. Surf. Yet, Mr. Stanley insists——

Chas. Surf. Stanley! why his name's Premium.

Jos. Surf. No, sir, Stanley.

Chas. Surf. No, no, Premium.

Jos. Surf. Well, no matter which—but——

Chas. Surf. Ay, ay, Stanley or Premium, 'tis the same thing, as you say; for I suppose he goes by half a hundred names, besides A. B. at the coffee-house. [*Knocking.*

Jos. Surf. 'Sdeath! here's Sir Oliver at the door.—Now I beg, Mr. Stanley——

Chas. Surf. Ay, ay, and I beg, Mr. Premium——

Sir Oliv. Gentlemen——

Jos. Surf. Sir, by Heaven you shall go!

Chas. Surf. Ay, out with him, certainly!

Sir Oliv. This violence——

Jos. Surf. Sir, 'tis your own fault.

Chas. Surf. Out with him, to be sure.

[*Both forcing* SIR OLIVER *out.*

Enter SIR PETER *and* LADY TEAZLE, MARIA, *and* ROWLEY.

Sir Pet. My old friend, Sir Oliver—hey! What in the name of wonder!—here are dutiful nephews—assault their uncle at his first visit!

Lady Teaz. Indeed, Sir Oliver, 'twas well we came in to rescue you.

Row. Truly it was; for I perceive, Sir Oliver, the character of old Stanley was no protection to you.

Sir Oliv. Nor of Premium either: the necessities of the former could not extort a shilling from that benevolent gentleman; and with the other I stood a chance of faring worse than my ancestors, and being knocked down without being bid for.

Jos. Surf. Charles!

Chas. Surf. Joseph!

Jos. Surf. 'Tis now complete!

Chas. Surf. Very.

Sir Oliv. Sir Peter, my friend, and Rowley too—look on that elder nephew of mine. You know what he has already received from my bounty; and you also know how gladly I would have regarded half my fortune as held in trust for him: judge then my disappointment in discovering him to be destitute of truth, charity, and gratitude!

Sir Pet. Sir Oliver, I should be more surprised at this declaration, if I had not myself found him to be mean, treacherous, and hypocritical.

Lady Teaz. And if the gentleman pleads not guilty to these, pray let him call me to his character.

Sir Pet. Then, I believe, we need add no more: if he knows himself, he will consider it as the most perfect punishment, that he is known to the world.

Chas. Surf. If they talk this way to Honesty, what will they say to me, by-and-by? [*Aside.*

[SIR PETER, LADY TEAZLE, *and* MARIA *retire.*

Sir Oliv. As for that prodigal, his brother, there——

Chas. Surf. Ay, now comes my turn: the damned family pictures will ruin me! [*Aside.*

Jos. Surf. Sir Oliver—uncle, will you honour me with a hearing?

Chas. Surf. Now, if Joseph would make one of his long speeches, I might recollect myself a little. [*Aside.*

Sir Oliv. I suppose you would undertake to justify yourself? [*To* JOSEPH SURFACE.

Jos. Surf. I trust I could.

Sir Oliv. [*To* CHARLES SURFACE.] Well, sir!—and you could justify yourself too, I suppose?

Chas. Surf. Not that I know of, Sir Oliver.

Sir Oliv. What!—Little Premium has been let too much into the secret, I suppose?

Chas. Surf. True, sir; but they were family secrets, and should not be mentioned again, you know.

Row. Come, Sir Oliver, I know you cannot speak of Charles's follies with anger.

Sir Oliv. Odd's heart, no more I can; nor with gravity either. Sir Peter, do you know the rogue bargained with me for all his ancestors; sold me judges and generals by the foot, and maiden aunts as cheap as broken china.

Chas. Surf. To be sure, Sir Oliver, I did make a little free with the family canvas, that's the truth on't. My ancestors may rise in judgment against me, there's no denying it; but believe me sincere when I tell you—and upon my soul I would not say so if I was not—that if I do not appear mortified at the exposure of my follies, it is because I feel at this moment the warmest satisfaction in seeing you, my liberal benefactor.

Sir Oliv. Charles, I believe you. Give me your hand again: the ill-looking little fellow over the settee has made your peace.

Chas. Surf. Then, sir, my gratitude to the original is still increased.

Lady Teaz. [*Advancing.*] Yet, I believe, Sir Oliver, here is one whom Charles is still more anxious to be reconciled to. [*Pointing to* MARIA.

Sir Oliv. Oh, I have heard of his attachment there; and, with the young lady's pardon, if I construe right—that blush——

Sir Pet. Well, child, speak your sentiments!

Mar. Sir, I have little to say, but that I shall rejoice to hear that he is happy; for me, whatever claim I had to his attention, I willingly resign to one who has a better title.

Chas. Surf. How, Maria!

Sir Pet. Heyday! what's the mystery now? While he appeared an incorrigible rake, you would give your hand to no one else; and now that he is likely to reform I'll warrant you won't have him!

Mar. His own heart and Lady Sneerwell know the cause.

Chas. Surf. Lady Sneerwell!

Jos. Surf. Brother, it is with great concern I am obliged to speak on this point, but my regard to justice compels me, and Lady Sneerwell's injuries can no longer be concealed.

[*Opens the door.*

Enter LADY SNEERWELL.

Sir Pet. So! another French milliner! Egad, he has one in every room in the house, I suppose!

Lady Sneer. Ungrateful Charles! Well may you be surprised, and feel for the indelicate situation your perfidy has forced me into.

Chas. Surf. Pray, uncle, is this another plot of yours? For, as I have life, I don't understand it.

Jos. Surf. I believe, sir, there is but the evidence of one person more necessary to make it extremely clear.

Sir Pet. And that person, I imagine, is Mr. Snake.—Rowley, you were perfectly right to bring him with us, and pray let him appear.

Row. Walk in, Mr. Snake.

Enter SNAKE.

I thought his testimony might be wanted; however, it happens unluckily, that he comes to confront Lady Sneerwell, not to support her.

Lady Sneer. A villain! Treacherous to me at last! Speak, fellow, have you too conspired against me!

Snake. I beg your ladyship ten thousand pardons: you paid me extremely liberally for the lie in question; but I unfortunately have been offered double to speak the truth.

Sir Pet. Plot and counter-plot, egad! I wish your ladyship joy of your negotiation.

Lady Sneer. The torments of shame and disappointment on you all! [*Going.*

Lady Teaz. Hold, Lady Sneerwell—before you go, let me thank you for the trouble you and that gentleman have taken, in writing letters from me to Charles, and answering them yourself; and let me also request you to make my respects to the scandalous college, of which you are president, and inform them, that Lady Teazle, licentiate, begs leave to return the diploma they granted her, as she leaves off practice, and kills characters no longer.

Lady Sneer. You too, madam!—provoking—insolent! May your husband live these fifty years! [*Exit.*

Sir Pet. Oons! what a fury!

Lady Teas. A malicious creature, indeed!

Sir Pet. What! not for her last wish?

Lady Teas. Oh, no!

Sir Oliv. Well, sir, and what have you to say now?

Jos. Surf. Sir, I am so confounded, to find that Lady Sneerwell could be guilty of suborning Mr. Snake in this manner, to impose on us all, that I know not what to say: however, lest her revengeful spirit should prompt her to injure my brother, I had certainly better follow her directly. For the man who attempts to—— [*Exit.*

Sir Pet. Moral to the last!

Sir Oliv. Ay, and marry her, Joseph, if you can. Oil and vinegar!—egad you'll do very well together.

Row. I believe we have no more occasion for Mr. Snake at present?

Snake. Before I go, I beg pardon once for all, for whatever uneasiness I have been the humble instrument of causing to the parties present.

Sir Pet. Well, well, you have made atonement by a good deed at last.

Snake. But I must request of the company, that it shall never be known.

Sir Pet. Hey! what the plague! are you ashamed of having done a right thing once in your life?

Snake. Ah, sir, consider—I live by the badness of my character; and, if it were once known that I had been betrayed into an honest action, I should lose every friend I have in the world.

Sir Oliv. Well, well—we'll not traduce you by saying anything in your praise, never fear. [*Exit* SNAKE.

Sir Pet. There's a precious rogue!

Lady Teas. See, Sir Oliver, there needs no persuasion now to reconcile your nephew and Maria.

Sir Oliv. Ay, ay, that's as it should be, and, egad, we'll have the wedding to-morrow morning.

Chas. Surf. Thank you, dear uncle.

Sir Pet. What, you rogue! don't you ask the girl's consent first?

Chas. Surf. Oh, I have done that a long time—a minute ago—and she has looked yes.

Mar. For shame, Charles!—I protest, Sir Peter, there has not been a word——

Sir Oliv. Well, then, the fewer the better; may your love for each other never know abatement.

Sir Pet. And may you live as happily together as Lady Teazle and I intend to do!

Chas. Surf. Rowley, my old friend, I am sure you congratulate me; and I suspect that I owe you much.

Sir Oliv. You do, indeed, Charles.

Sir Pet. Ay, honest Rowley always said you would refor.

Chas. Surf. Why, as to reforming, Sir Peter, I'll make no promises, and that I take to be a proof that I intend to set about it. But here shall be my monitor—my gentle guide.—Ah! can I leave the virtuous path those eyes illumine?

Though thou, dear maid, shouldst waive thy beauty's sway,
Thou still must rule, because I will obey:
An humble fugitive from Folly view,
No sanctuary near but Love and you: [*To the audience.*
You can, indeed, each anxious fear remove,
For even Scandal dies, if you approve. [*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

BY MR. COLMAN.

SPOKEN BY LADY TEAZLE.

I, WHO was late so volatile and gay,
Like a trade-wind must now blow all one way,
Bend all my cares, my studies, and my vows,
To one dull rusty weathercock—my spouse!
So wills our virtuous bard—the motley Bayes
Of crying epilogues and laughing plays!
Old bachelors, who marry smart young wives,
Learn from our play to regulate your lives:
Each bring his dear to town, all faults upon her—
London will prove the very source of honour.
Plunged fairly in, like a cold bath it serves,
When principles relax, to brace the nerves:
Such is my case; and yet I must deplore
That the gay dream of dissipation's o'er.
And say, ye fair! was ever lively wife,
Born with a genius for the highest life,
Like me untimely blasted in her bloom,
Like me condemn'd to such a dismal doom?
Save money—when I just knew how to waste it!
Leave London—just as I began to taste it!
Must I then watch the early crowing cock,
The melancholy ticking of a clock;

In a lone rustic hall for ever pounded,
With dogs, cats, rats, and squalling brats surrounded?
With humble curate can I now retire,
(While good Sir Peter boozes with the squire,)
And at backgammon mortify my soul,
That pants for loo, or flutters at a vole?
Seven's the main! Dear sound that must expire,
Lost at hot cockles round a Christmas fire;
The transient hour of fashion too soon spent,
Farewell the tranquil mind, farewell content!
Farewell the plumèd head, the cushion'd tête,
That takes the cushion from its proper seat!
That spirit-stirring drum!—card drums I mean,
Spadille—odd trick—pam—basto—king and queen!
And you, ye knockers, that, with brazen throat,
The welcome visitors' approach denote;
Farewell all quality of high renown,
Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious town!
Farewell! your revels I partake no more,
And Lady Teazle's occupation's o'er!
All this I told our bard; he smiled, and said 'twas clear,
I ought to play deep tragedy next year.
Meanwhile he drew wise morals from his play,
And in these solemn periods stalk'd away:—
"Bless'd were the fair like you; her faults who stopp'd,
And closed her follies when the curtain dropp'd!
No more in vice or error to engage,
Or play the fool at large on life's great stage."

THE CRITIC;

OR, A TRAGEDY REHEARSED.

A DRAMATIC PIECE IN THREE ACTS.

TO MRS. GREVILLE.

MADAM,—In requesting your permission to address the following pages to you, which, as they aim themselves to be critical, require every protection and allowance that approving taste or friendly prejudice can give them, I yet ventured to mention no other motive than the gratification of private friendship and esteem. Had I suggested a hope that your implied approbation would give a sanction to their defects, your particular reserve, and dislike to the reputation of critical taste, as well as of poetical talent, would have made you refuse the protection of your name to such a purpose. However, I am not so ungrateful as now to attempt to combat this disposition in you. I shall not here presume to argue that the present state of poetry claims and expects every assistance that taste and example can afford it; nor endeavour to prove that a fastidious concealment of the most elegant productions of judgment and fancy is an ill return for the possession of those endowments. Continue to deceive yourself in the idea that you are known only to be eminently admired and regarded for the valuable qualities that attach private friendships, and the graceful talents that adorn conversation. Enough of what you have written has stolen into full public notice to answer my purpose; and you will, perhaps, be the only person, conversant in elegant literature, who shall read this address and not perceive that by publishing your particular approbation of the following drama, I have a more interested object than to boast the true respect and regard with which I have the honour to be, Madam, your very sincere and obedient humble servant,

R. B. SHERIDAN.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AS ORIGINALLY ACTED AT DRURY-LANE THEATRE IN 1779.

SIR FRETFUL PLAGIARY	*Mr. Parsons.*	MR. HOPKINS	*Mr. Hopkins.*
PUFF	*Mr. King.*	MRS. DANGLE	*Mrs. Hopkins.*
DANGLE	*Mr. Dodd.*	SIGNORE PASTICCIO RITORNELLO	*Miss Field and the Miss Abrams.*
SNEER	*Mr. Palmer.*		
SIGNOR PASTICCIO RITORNELLO	*Mr. Delpini.*		
INTERPRETER	*Mr. Baddeley.*		
UNDER PROMPTER	*Mr. Phillimore.*		

Scenemen, Musicians, *and* Servants.

CHARACTERS OF THE TRAGEDY.

LORD BURLEIGH	*Mr. Moody.*	JUSTICE	*Mr. Packer.*
GOVERNOR OF TILBURY FORT	*Mr. Wrighten.*	SON	*Mr. Lamash.*
EARL OF LEICESTER	*Mr. Farren.*	CONSTABLE	*Mr. Fawcett.*
SIR WALTER RALEIGH	*Mr. Burton.*	THAMES	*Mr. Gawdry.*
SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON	*Mr. Waldron.*	TILBURINA	*Miss Pope.*
MASTER OF THE HORSE	*Mr. Kenny.*	CONFIDANT	*Mrs. Bradshaw.*
DON FEROLO WHISKERANDOS	*Mr. Bannister, jun.*	JUSTICE'S LADY	*Mrs. Johnston.*
BEEFEATER	*Mr. Wright.*	FIRST NIECE	*Miss Collett.*
		SECOND NIECE	*Miss Kirby.*
		Knights, Guards, Constables, Sentinels, Servants, Chorus, Rivers, Attendants, &c., &c.	

SCENE,—LONDON: *in* DANGLE'S *House during the First Act, and throughout the rest of the Play in* DRURY LANE THEATRE.

PROLOGUE.

BY THE HONOURABLE RICHARD FITZPATRICK.

THE sister Muses, whom these realms obey,
Who o'er the drama hold divided sway,
Sometimes by evil counsellors, 'tis said,
Like earth-born potentates have been misled.
In those gay days of wickedness and wit,
When Villiers criticised what Dryden writ,
The tragic queen, to please a tasteless crowd,
Had learn'd to bellow, rant, and roar so loud,
That frighten'd Nature, her best friend before,
The blustering beldam's company foreswore;
Her comic sister, who had wit 'tis true,
With all her merits, had her failings too;
And would sometimes in mirthful moments use
A style too flippant for a well-bred muse;
Then female modesty abash'd began
To seek the friendly refuge of the fan,
Awhile behind that slight intrenchment stood,
Till driven from thence, she left the stage for good.
In our more pious, and far chaster times,
These sure no longer are the Muses' crimes!
But some complain that, former faults to shun,
The reformation to extremes has run.
The frantic hero's wild delirium past,
Now insipidity succeeds bombast;
So slow Melpomene's cold numbers creep,
Here dulness seems her drowsy court to keep,
And we are scarce awake, whilst you are fast asleep.
Thalia, once so ill-behaved and rude,
Reform'd, is now become an arrant prude;
Retailing nightly to the yawning pit
The purest morals, undefiled by wit!

Our author offers, in these motley scenes,
A slight remonstrance to the drama's queens:
Nor let the goddesses be over nice;
Free-spoken subjects give the best advice.
Although not quite a novice in his trade,
His cause to-night requires no common aid.
To this, a friendly, just, and powerful court,
I come ambassador to beg support.
Can he undaunted brave the critic's rage?
In civil broils with brother bards engage?
Hold forth their errors to the public eye,
Nay more, e'en newspapers themselves defy?
Say, must his single arm encounter all?
By numbers vanquish'd, e'en the brave may fall;
And though no leader should success distrust,
Whose troops are willing, and whose cause is just;
To bid such hosts of angry foes defiance,
His chief dependence must be, your alliance.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room in* DANGLE'S *House.*

MR. *and* MRS. DANGLE *discovered at breakfast, and reading newspapers.*

Dang. [*Reading.*] *Brutus to Lord North.—Letter the second on the State of the Army*—Psha! *To the first L dash D of the A dash Y.—Genuine extract of a Letter from St. Kitt's.—Coxheath Intelligence.—It is now confidently asserted that Sir Charles Hardy*—Psha! nothing but about the fleet and the nation!—and I hate all politics but theatrical politics.—Where's the Morning Chronicle?

Mrs. Dang. Yes, that's your Gazette.

Dang. So, here we have it.—[*Reads.*] *Theatrical intelligence extraordinary.—We hear there is a new tragedy in rehearsal at Drury Lane Theatre, called the Spanish Armada, said to be written by Mr. Puff, a gentleman well known in the theatrical world. If we may allow ourselves to give credit to the report of the performers, who, truth to say, are in general but indifferent judges, this piece abounds with the most striking and received beauties of modern composition.*—So! I am very glad my friend Puff's tragedy is in such forwardness.—Mrs. Dangle, my dear, you will be very glad to hear that Puff's tragedy——

Mrs. Dang. Lord, Mr. Dangle, why will you plague me about such nonsense?—Now the plays are begun I shall have no peace.—Isn't it sufficient to make yourself ridiculous by your passion for the theatre, without continually teasing me to

join you? Why can't you ride your hobby-horse without desiring to place me on a pillion behind you, Mr. Dangle?

Dang. Nay, my dear, I was only going to read——

Mrs. Dang. No, no; you will never read anything that's worth listening to. You hate to hear about your country; there are letters every day with Roman signatures, demonstrating the certainty of an invasion, and proving that the nation is utterly undone. But you never will read anything to entertain one.

Dang. What has a woman to do with politics, Mrs. Dangle?

Mrs. Dang. And what have you to do with the theatre, Mr. Dangle? Why should you affect the character of a critic? I have no patience with you!—haven't you made yourself the jest of all your acquaintance by your interference in matters where you have no business? Are you not called a theatrical Quidnunc, and a mock Mæcenas to second-hand authors?

Dang. True; my power with the managers is pretty notorious. But is it no credit to have applications from all quarters for my interest—from lords to recommend fiddlers, from ladies to get boxes, from authors to get answers, and from actors to get engagements?

Mrs. Dang. Yes, truly; you have contrived to get a share in all the plague and trouble of theatrical property, without the profit, or even the credit of the abuse that attends it.

Dang. I am sure, Mrs. Dangle, you are no loser by it, however; you have all the advantages of it. Mightn't you, last winter, have had the reading of the new pantomime a fortnight previous to its performance? And doesn't Mr. Fosbrook let you take places for a play before it is advertised, and set you down for a box for every new piece through the season? And didn't my friend, Mr. Smatter, dedicate his last farce to you at my particular request, Mrs. Dangle?

Mrs. Dang. Yes; but wasn't the farce damned, Mr. Dangle? And to be sure it is extremely pleasant to have one's house made the motley rendezvous of all the lackeys of literature; the very high 'Change of trading authors and jobbing critics! —Yes, my drawing-room is an absolute register-office for candidate actors, and poets without character.—Then to be continually alarmed with misses and ma'ams piping hysteric changes on Juliets and Dorindas, Pollys and Ophelias; and the very furniture trembling at the probationary starts and unprovoked rants of would-be Richards and Hamlets!—And what is worse than all, now that the manager has monopolized the Opera House, haven't we the signors and signoras calling here, sliding their smooth semibreves, and gargling glib divisions in

their outlandish throats—with foreign emissaries and French spies, for aught I know, disguised like fiddlers and figure-dancers?

Dang. Mercy! Mrs. Dangle!

Mrs. Dang. And to employ yourself so idly at such an alarming crisis as this too—when, if you had the least spirit, you would have been at the head of one of the Westminster associations—or trailing a volunteer pike in the Artillery Ground! But you—o' my conscience, I believe, if the French were landed to-morrow, your first inquiry would be, whether they had brought a theatrical troop with them.

Dang. Mrs. Dangle, it does not signify—I say the stage is *the mirror of Nature*, and the actors are *the Abstract and brief Chronicles of the Time:* and pray what can a man of sense study better?—Besides, you will not easily persuade me that there is no credit or importance in being at the head of a band of critics, who take upon them to decide for the whole town, whose opinion and patronage all writers solicit, and whose recommendation no manager dares refuse.

Mrs. Dang. Ridiculous!—Both managers and authors of the least merit laugh at your pretensions.—The public is their critic—without whose fair approbation they know no play can rest on the stage, and with whose applause they welcome such attacks as yours, and laugh at the malice of them, where they can't at the wit.

Dang. Very well, madam—very well!

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Mr. Sneer, sir, to wait on you.

Dang. Oh, show Mr. Sneer up.—[*Exit* SERVANT.]—Plague on't, now we must appear loving and affectionate, or Sneer will hitch us into a story.

Mrs. Dang. With all my heart; you can't be more ridiculous than you are.

Dang. You are enough to provoke——

Enter SNEER.

Ha! my dear Sneer, I am vastly glad to see you.—My dear, here's Mr. Sneer.

Mrs. Dang. Good-morning to you, sir.

Dang. Mrs. Dangle and I have been diverting ourselves with the papers. Pray, Sneer, won't you go to Drury Lane Theatre the first night of Puff's tragedy?

Sneer. Yes; but I suppose one shan't be able to get in, for

on the first night of a new piece they always fill the house with orders to support it. But here, Dangle, I have brought you two pieces, one of which you must exert yourself to make the managers accept, I can tell you that; for 'tis written by a person of consequence.

Dang. So! now my plagues are beginning.

Sneer. Ay, I am glad of it, for now you'll be happy. Why, my dear Dangle, it is a pleasure to see how you enjoy your volunteer fatigue, and your solicited solicitations.

Dang. It's a great trouble—yet, egad, it's pleasant too.—Why, sometimes of a morning I have a dozen people call on me at breakfast-time, whose faces I never saw before, nor ever desire to see again.

Sneer. That must be very pleasant indeed!

Dang. And not a week but I receive fifty letters, and not a line in them about any business of my own.

Sneer. An amusing correspondence!

Dang. [*Reading.*] *Bursts into tears, and exit.*—What, is this a tragedy?

Sneer. No, that's a genteel comedy, not a translation—only taken from the French: it is written in a style which they have lately tried to run down; the true sentimental, and nothing ridiculous in it from the beginning to the end.

Mrs. Dang. Well, if they had kept to that, I should not have been such an enemy to the stage; there was some edification to be got from those pieces, Mr. Sneer!

Sneer. I am quite of your opinion, Mrs. Dangle: the theatre, in proper hands, might certainly be made the school of morality; but now, I am sorry to say it, people seem to go there principally for their entertainment!

Mrs. Dang. It would have been more to the credit of the managers to have kept it in the other line.

Sneer. Undoubtedly, madam; and hereafter perhaps to have had it recorded, that in the midst of a luxurious and dissipated age, they preserved two houses in the capital, where the conversation was always moral at least, if not entertaining!

Dang. Now, egad, I think the worst alteration is in the nicety of the audience!—No *double-entendre*, no smart innuendo admitted; even Vanbrugh and Congreve obliged to undergo a bungling reformation!

Sneer. Yes, and our prudery in this respect is just on a par with the artificial bashfulness of a courtesan, who increases the blush upon her cheek in an exact proportion to the diminution of her modesty.

Dang. Sneer can't even give the public a good word! But what have we here?—This seems a very odd——

Sneer. Oh, that's a comedy, on a very new plan; replete with wit and mirth, yet of a most serious moral! You see it is called *The Reformed House-breaker;* where, by the mere force of humour, house-breaking is put into so ridiculous a light, that if the piece has its proper run, I have no doubt but that bolts and bars will be entirely useless by the end of the season.

Dang. Egad, this is new indeed!

Sneer. Yes; it is written by a particular friend of mine, who has discovered that the follies and foibles of society are subjects unworthy the notice of the comic muse, who should be taught to stoop only at the greater vices and blacker crimes of humanity—gibbeting capital offences in five acts, and pillorying petty larcenies in two.—In short, his idea is to dramatize the penal laws, and make the stage a court of ease to the Old Bailey.

Dang. It is truly moral.

Re-enter SERVANT.

Ser. Sir Fretful Plagiary, sir.

Dang. Beg him to walk up.—[*Exit* SERVANT.] Now, Mrs. Dangle, Sir Fretful Plagiary is an author to your own taste.

Mrs. Dang. I confess he is a favourite of mine, because everybody else abuses him.

Sneer Very much to the credit of your charity, madam, if not of your judgment.

Dang. But, egad, he allows no merit to any author but himself, that's the truth on't—though he's my friend.

Sneer. Never.—He is as envious as an old maid verging on the desperation of six and thirty; and then the insidious humility with which he seduces you to give a free opinion on any of his works, can be exceeded only by the petulant arrogance with which he is sure to reject your observations.

Dang. Very true, egad—though he's my friend.

Sneer. Then his affected contempt of all newspaper strictures; though, at the same time, he is the sorest man alive, and shrinks like scorched parchment from the fiery ordeal of true criticism: yet is he so covetous of popularity, that he had rather be abused than not mentioned at all.

Dang. There's no denying it—though he is my friend.

Sneer. You have read the tragedy he has just finished, haven't you?

Dang. Oh yes; he sent it to me yesterday.

Sneer. Well, and you think it execrable, don't you?

Dang. Why, between ourselves, egad, I must own—though he is my friend—that it is one of the most ——He's here—[*Aside.*]—finished and most admirable perform——

Sir Fret. [*Without.*] Mr. Sneer with him, did you say?

Enter SIR FRETFUL PLAGIARY.

Dang. Ah, my dear friend!—Egad, we were just speaking of your tragedy.—Admirable, Sir Fretful, admirable!

Sneer. You never did anything beyond it, Sir Fretful—never in your life.

Sir Fret. You make me extremely happy; for without a compliment, my dear Sneer, there isn't a man in the world whose judgment I value as I do yours and Mr. Dangle's.

Mrs. Dang. They are only laughing at you, Sir Fretful; for it was but just now that——

Dang. Mrs. Dangle!—Ah, Sir Fretful, you know Mrs. Dangle.—My friend Sneer was rallying just now:—he knows how she admires you, and——

Sir Fret. O Lord, I am sure Mr. Sneer has more taste and sincerity than to——[*Aside.*] A damned double-faced fellow!

Dang. Yes, yes—Sneer will jest—but a better humoured——

Sir Fret. Oh, I know——

Dang. He has a ready turn for ridicule—his wit costs him nothing.

Sir Fret. No, egad—or I should wonder how he came by it. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Dang. Because his jest is always at the expense of his friend. [*Aside.*

Dang. But, Sir Fretful, have you sent your play to the managers yet?—or can I be of any service to you?

Sir Fret. No, no, I thank you: I believe the piece had sufficient recommendation with it.—I thank you though.—I sent it to the manager of Covent Garden Theatre this morning.

Sneer. I should have thought now, that it might have been cast (as the actors call it) better at Drury Lane.

Sir Fret. O lud! no—never send a play there while I live—hark'ee! [*Whispers* SNEER.

Sneer. Writes himself!—I know he does.

Sir Fret. I say nothing—I take away from no man's merit—am hurt at no man's good fortune—I say nothing.—But this I will say—through all my knowledge of life, I have observed

—that there is not a passion so strongly rooted in the human heart as envy.

Sneer. I believe you have reason for what you say, indeed.

Sir Fret. Besides—I can tell you it is not always so safe to leave a play in the hands of those who write themselves.

Sneer. What, they may steal from them, hey, my dear Plagiary?

Sir Fret. Steal!—to be sure they may; and, egad, serve your best thoughts as gypsies do stolen children, disfigure them to make 'em pass for their own.

Sneer. But your present work is a sacrifice to Melpomene, and he, you know, never——

Sir Fret. That's no security: a dexterous plagiarist may do anything. Why, sir, for aught I know, he might take out some of the best things in my tragedy, and put them into his own comedy.

Sneer. That might be done, I dare be sworn.

Sir Fret. And then, if such a person gives you the least hint or assistance, he is devilish apt to take the merit of the whole——

Dang. If it succeeds.

Sir Fret. Ay, but with regard to this piece, I think I can hit that gentleman, for I can safely swear he never read it.

Sneer. I'll tell you how you may hurt him more.

Sir Fret. How?

Sneer. Swear he wrote it.

Sir Fret. Plague on't now, Sneer, I shall take it ill!—I believe you want to take away my character as an author.

Sneer. Then I am sure you ought to be very much obliged to me.

Sir Fret. Hey!—sir!——

Dang. Oh, you know, he never means what he says.

Sir Fret. Sincerely then—you do like the piece?

Sneer. Wonderfully!

Sir Fret. But come now, there must be something that you think might be mended, hey?—Mr. Dangle, has nothing struck you?

Dang. Why, faith, it is but an ungracious thing, for the most part, to——

Sir Fret. With most authors it is just so indeed; they are in general strangely tenacious! But, for my part, I am never so well pleased as when a judicious critic points out any defect to me; for what is the purpose of showing a work to a friend, if you don't mean to profit by his opinion?

Sneer. Very true.—Why then, though I seriously admire the piece upon the whole, yet there is one small objection; which, if you'll give me leave, I'll mention.

Sir Fret. Sir, you can't oblige me more.

Sneer. I think it wants incident.

Sir Fret. Good God! you surprise me!—wants incident!

Sneer. Yes; I own I think the incidents are too few.

Sir Fret. Good God! Believe me, Mr. Sneer, there is no person for whose judgment I have a more implicit deference. But I protest to you, Mr. Sneer, I am only apprehensive that the incidents are too crowded.—My dear Dangle, how does it strike you?

Dang. Really I can't agree with my friend Sneer. I think the plot quite sufficient; and the four first acts by many degrees the best I ever read or saw in my life. If I might venture to suggest anything, it is that the interest rather falls off in the fifth.

Sir Fret. Rises, I believe you mean, sir.

Dang. No, I don't, upon my word.

Sir Fret. Yes, yes, you do, upon my soul!—it certainly don't fall off, I assure you.—No, no; it don't fall off.

Dang. Now, Mrs. Dangle, didn't you say it struck you in the same light?

Mrs. Dang. No, indeed, I did not.—I did not see a fault in any part of the play, from the beginning to the end.

Sir Fret. Upon my soul, the women are the best judges after all!

Mrs. Dang. Or, if I made any objection, I am sure it was to nothing in the piece; but that I was afraid it was, on the whole, a little too long.

Sir Fret. Pray, madam, do you speak as to duration of time; or do you mean that the story is tediously spun out?

Mrs. Dang. O lud! no.—I speak only with reference to the usual length of acting plays.

Sir Fret. Then I am very happy—very happy indeed—because the play is a short play, a remarkably short play. I should not venture to differ with a lady on a point of taste; but, on these occasions, the watch, you know, is the critic.

Mrs. Dang. Then, I suppose, it must have been Mr. Dangle's drawling manner of reading it to me.

Sir Fret. Oh, if Mr. Dangle read it, that's quite another affair!—But I assure you, Mrs. Dangle, the first evening you can spare me three hours and a half, I'll undertake to read you

the whole from beginning to end, with the prologue and epilogue, and allow time for the music between the acts.

Mrs. Dang. I hope to see it on the stage next.

Dang. Well, Sir Fretful, I wish you may be able to get rid as easily of the newspaper criticisms as you do of ours.

Sir Fret. The newspapers! Sir, they are the most villainous—licentious—abominable—infernal—Not that I ever read them—no—I make it a rule never to look into a newspaper.

Dang. You are quite right; for it certainly must hurt an author of delicate feelings to see the liberties they take.

Sir Fret. No, quite the contrary! their abuse is, in fact, the best panegyric—I like it of all things. An author's reputation is only in danger from their support.

Sneer. Why that's true—and that attack, now, on you the other day——

Sir Fret. What? where?

Dang. Ay, you mean in a paper of Thursday: it was completely ill-natured, to be sure.

Sir Fret. Oh, so much the better.—Ha! ha! ha! I wouldn't have it otherwise.

Dang. Certainly it is only to be laughed at; for——

Sir Fret. You don't happen to recollect what the fellow said, do you?

Sneer. Pray, Dangle—Sir Fretful seems a little anxious——

Sir Fret. O lud, no!—anxious!—not I,—not the least.—I—but one may as well hear, you know.

Dang. Sneer, do you recollect?—[*Aside to* SNEER.] Make out something.

Sneer. [*Aside to* DANGLE.] I will.—[*Aloud.*] Yes, yes, I remember perfectly.

Sir Fret. Well, and pray now—not that it signifies—what might the gentleman say?

Sneer. Why, he roundly asserts that you have not the slightest invention or original genius whatever; though you are the greatest traducer of all other authors living.

Sir Fret. Ha! ha! ha!—very good!

Sneer. That as to comedy, you have not one idea of your own, he believes, even in your commonplace-book—where stray jokes and pilfered witticisms are kept with as much method as the ledger of the lost and stolen office.

Sir Fret. Ha! ha! ha!—very pleasant!

Sneer. Nay, that you are so unlucky as not to have the skill even to steal with taste:—but that you glean from the refuse of obscure volumes, where more judicious plagiarists have been

before you; so that the body of your work is a composition of dregs and sentiments—like a bad tavern's worst wine.

Sir Fret. Ha! ha!

Sneer. In your more serious efforts, he says, your bombast would be less intolerable, if the thoughts were ever suited to the expression: but the homeliness of the sentiment stares through the fantastic encumbrance of its fine language, like a clown in one of the new uniforms!

Sir Fret. Ha! ha!

Sneer. That your occasional tropes and flowers suit the general coarseness of your style, as tambour sprigs would a ground of linsey-woolsey; while your imitations of Shakespeare resemble the mimicry of Falstaff's page, and are about as near the standard of the original.

Sir Fret. Ha!

Sneer. In short, that even the finest passages you steal are of no service to you; for the poverty of your own language prevents their assimilating; so that they lie on the surface like lumps of marl on a barren moor, encumbering what it is not in their power to fertilize!

Sir Fret. [*After great agitation.*] Now, another person would be vexed at this!

Sneer. Oh! but I wouldn't have told you—only to divert you.

Sir Fret. I know it—I am diverted.—Ha! ha! ha!—not the least invention!—Ha! ha! ha!—very good!—very good!

Sneer. Yes—no genius! ha! ha! ha!

Dang. A severe rogue! ha! ha! ha! But you are quite right, Sir Fretful, never to read such nonsense.

Sir Fret. To be sure—for if there is anything to one's praise, it is a foolish vanity to be gratified at it; and, if it is abuse—why one is always sure to hear of it from one damned good-natured friend or another!

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Sir, there is an Italian gentleman, with a French interpreter, and three young ladies, and a dozen musicians, who say they are sent by Lady Rondeau and Mrs. Fugue.

Dang. Gadso! they come by appointment!—Dear Mrs. Dangle, do let them know I'll see them directly.

Mrs. Dang. You know, Mr. Dangle, I shan't understand a word they say.

Dang. But you hear there's an interpreter.

Mrs. Dang. Well, I'll try to endure their complaisance till you come. [*Exit.*

Ser. And Mr. Puff, sir, has sent word that the last rehearsal is to be this morning, and that he'll call on you presently.

Dang. That's true—I shall certainly be at home.—[*Exit* SERVANT.]—Now, Sir Fretful, if you have a mind to have justice done you in the way of answer, egad, Mr. Puff's your man.

Sir Fret. Psha! sir, why should I wish to have it answered, when I tell you I am pleased at it?

Dang. True, I had forgot that. But I hope you are not fretted at what Mr. Sneer——

Sir Fret. Zounds! no, Mr. Dangle; don't I tell you these things never fret me in the least?

Dang. Nay, I only thought——

Sir Fret. And let me tell you, Mr. Dangle, 'tis damned affronting in you to suppose that I am hurt when I tell you I am not.

Sneer. But why so warm, Sir Fretful?

Sir Fret. Gad's life! Mr. Sneer, you are as absurd as Dangle: how often must I repeat it to you, that nothing can vex me but your supposing it possible for me to mind the damned nonsense you have been repeating to me!—and, let me tell you, if you continue to believe this, you must mean to insult me, gentlemen—and, then, your disrespect will affect me no more than the newspaper criticisms—and I shall treat it with exactly the same calm indifference and philosophic contempt—and so your servant. [*Exit.*

Sneer. Ha! ha! ha! poor Sir Fretful! Now will he go and vent his philosophy in anonymous abuse of all modern critics and authors.—But, Dangle, you must get your friend Puff to take me to the rehearsal of his tragedy.

Dang. I'll answer for't, he'll thank you for desiring it. But come and help me to judge of this musical family: they are recommended by people of consequence, I assure you.

Sneer. I am at your disposal the whole morning:—but I thought you had been a decided critic in music as well as in literature.

Dang. So I am—but I have a bad ear. I'faith, Sneer, though, I am afraid we were a little too severe on Sir Fretful—though he is my friend.

Sneer. Why, 'tis certain, that unnecessarily to mortify the vanity of any writer is a cruelty which mere dulness never can deserve; but where a base and personal malignity usurps the place of literary emulation, the aggressor deserves neither quarter nor pity.

Dang. That's true, egad!—though he's my friend!

SCENE II.—*A Drawing-room in* DANGLE'S *House.*

MRS. DANGLE, SIGNOR PASTICCIO RITORNELLO, SIGNORE PASTICCIO RITORNELLO, INTERPRETER, *and* MUSICIANS *discovered.*

Interp. Je dis, madame, j'ai l'honneur to introduce et de vous demander votre protection pour le Signor Pasticcio Ritornello et pour sa charmante famille.

Signor Past. Ah! vosignoria, noi vi preghiamo di favoritevi colla vostra protezione.

1 *Signora Past.* Vosignoria fatevi questi grazie.

2 *Signora Past.* Si, signora.

Interp. Madame—me interpret.—C'est à dire—in English —qu'ils vous prient de leur faire l'honneur——

Mrs. Dang. I say again, gentlemen, I don't understand a word you say.

Signor Past. Questo signore spiegherò——

Interp. Oui—me interpret.—Nous avons les lettres de recommendation pour Monsieur Dangle de——

Mrs. Dang. Upon my word, sir, I don't understand you.

Signor Past. La Contessa Rondeau è nostra padrona.

3 *Signora Past.* Si, padre, et Miladi Fugue.

Interp. O!—me interpret.—Madame, ils disent—in English —Qu'ils ont l'honneur d'être protégés de ces dames.—You understand?

Mrs. Dang. No, sir,—no understand!

Enter DANGLE *and* SNEER.

Interp. Ah, voici, Monsieur Dangle!

All Italians. Ah! Signor Dangle!

Mrs. Dang. Mr. Dangle, here are two very civil gentlemen trying to make themselves understood, and I don't know which is the interpreter.

Dang. Eh, bien!

[*The* INTERPRETER *and* SIGNOR PASTICCIO *here speak at the same time.*]

Interp. Monsieur Dangle, le grand bruit de vos talens pour la critique, et de votre intérêt avec messieurs les directeurs à tous les théâtres——

Signor Past. Vosignoria siete si famoso par la vostra conoscenza, e vostra interessa colla le direttore da——

Dang. Egad, I think the interpreter is the hardest to be understood of the two!

Sneer. Why, I thought, Dangle, you had been an admirable linguist!

Dang. So I am, if they would not talk so damned fast.

Sneer. Well, I'll explain that—the less time we lose in hearing them the better—for that, I suppose, is what they are brought here for.

[*Speaks to* SIGNOR PASTICCIO—*they sing trios, &c.,* DANGLE *beating out of time.*]

Enter SERVANT *and whispers* DANGLE.

Dang. Show him up.—[*Exit* SERVANT.] Bravo! admirable! bravissimo! admirablissimo!—Ah! Sneer! where will you find voices such as these in England?

Sneer. Not easily.

Dang. But Puff is coming.—Signor and little signoras obligatissimo!—Sposa Signora Danglena—Mrs. Dangle, shall I beg you to offer them some refreshments, and take their address in the next room.

[*Exit* MRS. DANGLE *with* SIGNOR PASTICCIO, SIGNORE PASTICCIO, MUSICIANS, *and* INTERPRETER, *ceremoniously.*

Re-enter SERVANT.

Ser. Mr. Puff, sir. [*Exit.*

Enter PUFF.

Dang. My dear Puff!

Puff. My dear Dangle, how is it with you?

Dang. Mr. Sneer, give me leave to introduce Mr. Puff to you.

Puff. Mr. Sneer is this?—Sir, he is a gentleman whom I have long panted for the honour of knowing—a gentleman whose critical talents and transcendent judgment——

Sneer. Dear sir——

Dang. Nay, don't be modest, Sneer; my friend Puff only talks to you in the style of his profession.

Sneer. His profession!

Puff. Yes, sir; I make no secret of the trade I follow: among friends and brother authors, Dangle knows I love to be frank on the subject, and to advertise myself *vivâ voce.*—I am, sir, a practitioner in panegyric, or, to speak more plainly, a professor of the art of puffing, at your service—or anybody else's.

Sneer. Sir, you are very obliging!—I believe, Mr. Puff, I have often admired your talents in the daily prints.

Puff. Yes, sir, I flatter myself I do as much business in that way as any six of the fraternity in town.—Devilish hard work all the summer, friend Dangle,—never worked harder! But, hark'ee,—the winter managers were a little sore, I believe.

Dang. No; I believe they took it all in good part.

Puff. Ay! then that must have been affectation in them: for, egad, there were some of the attacks which there was no laughing at!

Sneer. Ay, the humorous ones.—But I should think, Mr. Puff, that authors would in general be able to do this sort of work for themselves.

Puff. Why, yes—but in a clumsy way. Besides, we look on that as an encroachment, and so take the opposite side. I dare say, now, you conceive half the very civil paragraphs and advertisements you see to be written by the parties concerned, or their friends? No such thing: nine out of ten manufactured by me in the way of business.

Sneer. Indeed!

Puff. Even the auctioneers now—the auctioneers, I say—though the rogues have lately got some credit for their language—not an article of the merit theirs: take them out of their pulpits, and they are as dull as catalogues!—No, sir; 'twas I first enriched their style—'twas I first taught them to crowd their advertisements with panegyrical superlatives, each epithet rising above the other, like the bidders in their own auction-rooms! From me they learned to inlay their phraseology with variegated chips of exotic metaphor: by me too their inventive faculties were called forth:—yes, sir, by me they were instructed to clothe ideal walls with gratuitous fruits—to insinuate obsequious rivulets into visionary groves—to teach courteous shrubs to nod their approbation of the grateful soil; or on emergencies to raise upstart oaks, where there never had been an acorn; to create a delightful vicinage without the assistance of a neighbour; or fix the temple of Hygeia in the fens of Lincolnshire!

Dang. I am sure you have done them infinite service; for now, when a gentleman is ruined, he parts with his house with some credit.

Sneer. Service! if they had any gratitude, they would erect a statue to him; they would figure him as a presiding Mercury, the god of traffic and fiction, with a hammer in his hand instead of a caduceus.—But pray, Mr. Puff, what first put you on exercising your talents in this way?

Puff. Egad, sir, sheer necessity!—the proper parent of an art so nearly allied to invention. You must know, Mr. Sneer, that from the first time I tried my hand at an advertisement, my success was such, that for some time after I led a most extraordinary life indeed!

Sneer. How, pray?

Puff. Sir, I supported myself two years entirely by my misfortunes.

Sneer. By your misfortunes!

Puff. Yes, sir, assisted by long sickness, and other occasional disorders; and a very comfortable living I had of it.

Sneer. From sickness and misfortunes! You practised as a doctor and an attorney at once?

Puff. No, egad; both maladies and miseries were my own.

Sneer. Hey! what the plague!

Dang. 'Tis true, i'faith.

Puff. Hark'ee!—By advertisements—*To the charitable and humane!* and *To those whom Providence hath blessed with affluence!*

Sneer. Oh, I understand you.

Puff. And, in truth, I deserved what I got! for, I suppose never man went through such a series of calamities in the same space of time. Sir, I was five times made a bankrupt, and reduced from a state of affluence, by a train of unavoidable misfortunes: then, sir, though a very industrious tradesman, I was twice burned out, and lost my little all both times: I lived upon those fires a month. I soon after was confined by a most excruciating disorder, and lost the use of my limbs: that told very well; for I had the case strongly attested, and went about to collect the subscriptions myself.

Dang. Egad, I believe that was when you first called on me.

Puff. In November last?—O no; I was at that time a close prisoner in the Marshalsea, for a debt benevolently contracted to serve a friend. I was afterwards twice tapped for a dropsy, which declined into a very profitable consumption. I was then reduced to—O no—then, I became a widow with six helpless children, after having had eleven husbands pressed, and being left every time eight months gone with child, and without money to get me into an hospital!

Sneer. And you bore all with patience, I make no doubt?

Puff. Why, yes; though I made some occasional attempts at *felo de se;* but as I did not find those rash actions answer, I left off killing myself very soon. Well, sir, at last, what with bankruptcies, fires, gouts, dropsies, imprisonments, and other valuable calamities, having got together a pretty handsome sum, I determined to quit a business which had always gone rather against my conscience, and in a more liberal way still to indulge my talents for fiction and embellishments, through my

favourite channels of diurnal communication—and so, sir, you have my history.

Sneer. Most obligingly communicative indeed! and your confession, if published, might certainly serve the cause of true charity, by rescuing the most useful channels of appeal to benevolence from the cant of imposition. But surely, Mr. Puff, there is no great mystery in your present profession?

Puff. Mystery, sir! I will take upon me to say the matter was never scientifically treated nor reduced to rule before.

Sneer. Reduced to rule!

Puff. O lud, sir, you are very ignorant, I am afraid!—Yes, sir, puffing is of various sorts; the principal are, the puff direct, the puff preliminary, the puff collateral, the puff collusive, and the puff oblique, or puff by implication. These all assume, as circumstances require, the various forms of Letter to the Editor, Occasional Anecdote, Impartial Critique, Observation from Correspondent, or Advertisement from the Party.

Sneer. The puff direct, I can conceive——

Puff. O yes, that's simple enough! For instance,—a new comedy or farce is to be produced at one of the theatres (though by-the-by they don't bring out half what they ought to do)—the author, suppose Mr. Smatter, or Mr. Dapper, or any particular friend of mine—very well; the day before it is to be performed, I write an account of the manner in which it was received; I have the plot from the author, and only add—"characters strongly drawn—highly coloured—hand of a master—fund of genuine humour—mine of invention—neat dialogue—Attic salt." Then for the performance—"Mr. Dodd was astonishingly great in the character of Sir Harry. That universal and judicious actor, Mr. Palmer, perhaps never appeared to more advantage than in the colonel;—but it is not in the power of language to do justice to Mr. King: indeed he more than merited those repeated bursts of applause which he drew from a most brilliant and judicious audience. As to the scenery—the miraculous powers of Mr. De Loutherbourg's pencil are universally acknowledged. In short, we are at a loss which to admire most, the unrivalled genius of the author, the great attention and liberality of the managers, the wonderful abilities of the painter, or the incredible exertions of all the performers."

Sneer. That's pretty well indeed, sir.

Puff. Oh, cool!—quite cool!—to what I sometimes do.

Sneer. And do you think there are any who are influenced by this?

Puff. O lud, yes, sir! the number of those who undergo the fatigue of judging for themselves is very small indeed.

Sneer. Well, sir, the puff preliminary?

Puff. O, that, sir, does well in the form of a caution. In a matter of gallantry now—Sir Flimsy Gossamer wishes to be well with Lady Fanny Fete—he applies to me—I open trenches for him with a paragraph in the Morning Post.—"It is recommended to the beautiful and accomplished Lady F four stars F dash E to be on her guard against that dangerous character, Sir F dash G; who, however pleasing and insinuating his manners may be, is certainly not remarkable for the *constancy of his attachments!*"—in italics. Here, you see, Sir Flimsy Gossamer is introduced to the particular notice of Lady Fanny, who perhaps never thought of him before—she finds herself publicly cautioned to avoid him, which naturally makes her desirous of seeing him; the observation of their acquaintance causes a pretty kind of mutual embarrassment; this produces a sort of sympathy of interest, which if Sir Flimsy is unable to improve effectually, he at least gains the credit of having their names mentioned together, by a particular set, and in a particular way—which nine times out of ten is the full accomplishment of modern gallantry.

Dang. Egad, Sneer, you will be quite an adept in the business.

Puff. Now, sir, the puff collateral is much used as an appendage to advertisements, and may take the form of anecdote.—"Yesterday, as the celebrated George Bonmot was sauntering down St. James's Street, he met the lively Lady Mary Myrtle coming out of the park:—'Good God, Lady Mary, I'm surprised to meet you in a white jacket,—for I expected never to have seen you, but in a full-trimmed uniform and a light horseman's cap!'—'Heavens, George, where could you have learned that?'—'Why,' replied the wit, 'I just saw a print of you, in a new publication called the Camp Magazine; which, by-the-by, is a devilish clever thing, and is sold at No. 3, on the right hand of the way, two doors from the printing-office, the corner of Ivy Lane, Paternoster Row, price only one shilling.'"

Sneer. Very ingenious indeed!

Puff. But the puff collusive is the newest of any; for it acts in the disguise of determined hostility. It is much used by bold booksellers and enterprising poets.—"An indignant correspondent observes, that the new poem called *Beelzebub's Cotillon*, or *Proserpine's Fête Champêtre*, is one of the most unjustifiable performances he ever read. The severity with which certain characters are handled is quite shocking: and as

there are many descriptions in it too warmly coloured for female delicacy, the shameful avidity with which this piece is bought by all people of fashion is a reproach on the taste of the times, and a disgrace to the delicacy of the age." Here you see the two strongest inducements are held forth; first, that nobody ought to read it; and secondly, that everybody buys it: on the strength of which the publisher boldly prints the tenth edition, before he had sold ten of the first; and then establishes it by threatening himself with the pillory, or absolutely indicting himself for *scan. mag.*

Dang. Ha! ha! ha;—'gad, I know it is so.

Puff. As to the puff oblique, or puff by implication, it is too various and extensive to be illustrated by an instance: it attracts in titles and presumes in patents; it lurks in the limitation of a subscription, and invites in the assurance of crowd and incommodation at public places; it delights to draw forth concealed merit, with a most disinterested assiduity; and sometimes wears a countenance of smiling censure and tender reproach. It has a wonderful memory for parliamentary debates, and will often give the whole speech of a favoured member with the most flattering accuracy. But, above all, it is a great dealer in reports and suppositions. It has the earliest intelligence of intended preferments that will reflect honour on the patrons; and embryo promotions of modest gentlemen, who know nothing of the matter themselves. It can hint a ribbon for implied services in the air of a common report; and with the carelessness of a casual paragraph, suggest officers into commands, to which they have no pretension but their wishes. This, sir, is the last principal class of the art of puffing—an art which I hope you will now agree with me is of the highest dignity, yielding a tablature of benevolence and public spirit; befriending equally trade, gallantry, criticism, and politics: the applause of genius—the register of charity—the triumph of heroism—the self-defence of contractors—the fame of orators—and the gazette of ministers.

Sneer. Sir, I am completely a convert both to the importance and ingenuity of your profession; and now, sir, there is but one thing which can possibly increase my respect for you, and that is, your permitting me to be present this morning at the rehearsal of your new trage——

Puff. Hush, for heaven's sake!—*My* tragedy!—Egad, Dangle, I take this very ill: you know how apprehensive I am of being known to be the author.

Dang. I'faith I would not have told—but it's in the papers, and your name at length in the Morning Chronicle

Puff. Ah! those damned editors never can keep a secret!—Well, Mr. Sneer, no doubt you will do me great honour—I shall be infinitely happy—highly flattered——

Dang. I believe it must be near the time—shall we go together?

Puff. No; it will not be yet this hour, for they are always late at that theatre: besides, I must meet you there, for I have some little matters here to send to the papers, and a few paragraphs to scribble before I go.—[*Looking at memorandums.*] Here is *A conscientious Baker, on the subject of the Army Bread*, and *A Detester of visible Brickwork, in favour of the new-invented Stucco;* both in the style of Junius, and promised for to-morrow. The Thames navigation too is at a stand. Miso-mud or Anti-shoal must go to work again directly.—Here too are some political memorandums—I see; ay—*To take Paul Jones, and get the Indiamen out of the Shannon—reinforce Byron—compel the Dutch to*—so!—I must do that in the evening papers, or reserve it for the Morning Herald; for I know that I have undertaken to-morrow, besides, to establish the unanimity of the fleet in the Public Advertiser, and to shoot Charles Fox in the Morning Post.—So, egad, I han't a moment to lose.

Dang. Well, we'll meet in the Green Room.

[*Exeunt severally.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Theatre before the Curtain.*

Enter DANGLE, PUFF, *and* SNEER.

Puff. No, no, sir; what Shakspeare says of actors may be better applied to the purpose of plays; they ought to be *the abstract and brief chronicles of the time.* Therefore when history, and particularly the history of our own country, furnishes anything like a case in point, to the time in which an author writes, if he knows his own interest, he will take advantage of it; so, sir, I call my tragedy *The Spanish Armada;* and have laid the scene before Tilbury Fort.

Sneer. A most happy thought, certainly!

Dang. Egad it was—I told you so. But pray now, I don't understand how you have contrived to introduce any love into it.

Puff. Love! oh, nothing so easy! for it is a received point among poets, that where history gives you a good heroic outline for a play, you may fill up with a little love at your own discretion: in doing which, nine times out of ten, you only

make up a deficiency in the private history of the times. Now I rather think I have done this with some success.

Sneer. No scandal about Queen Elizabeth, I hope?

Puff. O lud! no, no;—I only suppose the governor of Tilbury Fort's daughter to be in love with the son of the Spanish admiral.

Sneer. Oh, is that all!

Dang. Excellent, i'faith! I see at once. But won't this appear rather improbable?

Puff. To be sure it will—but what the plague! a play is not to show occurrences that happen every day, but things just so strange, that though they never did, they might happen.

Sneer. Certainly nothing is unnatural, that is not physically impossible.

Puff. Very true—and for that matter Don Ferolo Whiskerandos, for that's the lover's name, might have been over here in the train of the Spanish ambassador; or Tilburina, for that is the lady's name, might have been in love with him, from having heard his character, or seen his picture; or from knowing that he was the last man in the world she ought to be in love with—or for any other good female reason.—However, sir, the fact is, that though she is but a knight's daughter, egad! she is in love like any princess!

Dang. Poor young lady! I feel for her already! for I can conceive how great the conflict must be between her passion and her duty; her love for her country, and her love for Don Ferolo Whiskerandos!

Puff. Oh, amazing!—her poor susceptible heart is swayed to and fro by contending passions like——

Enter UNDER PROMPTER.

Und. Promp. Sir, the scene is set, and everything is ready to begin, if you please.

Puff. Egad, then we'll lose no time.

Und. Promp. Though, I believe, sir, you will find it very short, for all the performers have profited by the kind permission you granted them.

Puff. Hey! what?

Und. Promp. You know, sir, you gave them leave to cut out or omit whatever they found heavy or unnecessary to the plot, and I must own they have taken very liberal advantage of your indulgence.

Puff. Well, well.—They are in general very good judges, and I know I am luxuriant.—Now, Mr. Hopkins, as soon as you please.

Und. Promp. [*To the* Orchestra.] Gentlemen, will you play a few bars of something, just to——

Puff. Ay, that's right; for as we have the scenes and dresses, egad, we'll go to't, as if it was the first night's performance;—but you need not mind stopping between the acts.—[*Exit* UNDER PROMPTER.—Orchestra *play—then the bell rings.*] So! stand clear, gentlemen. Now you know there will be a cry of Down! down!—Hats off!—Silence!—Then up curtain, and let us see what our painters have done for us. [*Curtain rises.*

SCENE II.—*Tilbury Fort.*

"*Two* SENTINELS *discovered asleep.*"

Dang. Tilbury Fort!—very fine indeed!

Puff. Now, what do you think I open with?

Sneer. Faith, I can't guess——

Puff. A clock.—Hark!—[*Clock strikes.*] I open with a clock striking, to beget an awful attention in the audience: it also marks the time, which is four o'clock in the morning, and saves a description of the rising sun, and a great deal about gilding the eastern hemisphere.

Dang. But pray, are the sentinels to be asleep?

Puff. Fast as watchmen.

Sneer. Isn't that odd though at such an alarming crisis?

Puff. To be sure it is,—but smaller things must give way to a striking scene at the opening; that's a rule. And the case is, that two great men are coming to this very spot to begin the piece: now, it is not to be supposed they would open their lips, if these fellows were watching them; so, egad, I must either have sent them off their posts, or set them asleep.

Sneer. Oh, that accounts for it. But tell us, who are these coming?

Puff. These are they—Sir Walter Raleigh, and Sir Christopher Hatton. You'll know Sir Christopher by his turning out his toes—famous, you know, for his dancing. I like to preserve all the little traits of character.—Now attend.

"*Enter* SIR WALTER RALEIGH *and* SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON.
"*Sir Christ.* True, gallant Raleigh!"—

Dang. What, they had been talking before?

Puff. Oh yes; all the way as they came along.—[*To the* actors.] I beg pardon, gentlemen, but these are particular friends of mine, whose remarks may be of great service to us.—[*To* SNEER *and* DANGLE.] Don't mind interrupting them whenever anything strikes you.

"*Sir Christ.* True, gallant Raleigh!
But oh, thou champion of thy country's fame,
There is a question which I yet must ask:
A question which I never ask'd before—
What mean these mighty armaments?
This general muster? and this throng of chiefs?

Sneer. Pray, Mr. Puff, how came Sir Christopher Hatton never to ask that question before?

Puff. What, before the play began?—how the plague could he?

Dang. That's true, i'faith!

Puff. But you will hear what he thinks of the matter.

"*Sir Christ.* Alas! my noble friend, when I behold
Yon tented plains in martial symmetry
Array'd; when I count o'er yon glittering lines
Of crested warriors, where the proud steeds neigh,
And valour-breathing trumpet's shrill appeal,
Responsive vibrate on my listening ear;
When virgin majesty herself I view,
Like her protecting Pallas, veil'd in steel,
With graceful confidence exhort to arms!
When, briefly, all I hear or see bears stamp
Of martial vigilance and stern defence,
I cannot but surmise—forgive, my friend,
If the conjecture's rash—I cannot but
Surmise the state some danger apprehends!"

Sneer. A very cautious conjecture that.

Puff. Yes, that's his character; not to give an opinion but on secure grounds.—Now then.

"*Sir Walt.* O most accomplish'd Christopher!"——

Puff. He calls him by his christian name, to show that they are on the most familiar terms.

"*Sir Walt.* O most accomplish'd Christopher! I find
Thy staunch sagacity still tracks the future,
In the fresh print of the o'ertaken past."

Puff. Figurative!

"*Sir Walt.* Thy fears are just.
Sir Christ. But where? whence? when? and what
The danger is,—methinks I fain would learn.
Sir Walt. You know, my friend, scarce two revolving suns,
And three revolving moons, have closed their course
Since haughty Philip, in despite of peace,
With hostile hand hath struck at England's trade.
Sir Christ. I know it well.
Sir Walt. Philip, you know, is proud Iberia's king!
Sir Christ. He is.
Sir Walt. His subjects in base bigotry
And Catholic oppression held;—while we,
You know, the Protestant persuasion hold.

"*Sir Christ.* We do.
Sir Walt. You know, beside, his boasted armament,
The famed Armada, by the Pope baptized,
With purpose to invade these realms——
Sir Christ. Is sailed,
Our last advices so report.
Sir Walt. While the Iberian admiral's chief hope,
His darling son——
Sir Christ. Ferolo Whiskerandos hight——
Sir Walt. The same—by chance a prisoner hath been ta'en,
And in this fort of Tilbury——
Sir Christ. Is now
Confined—'tis true, and oft from yon tall turret's top
I've mark'd the youthful Spaniard's haughty mien—
Unconquer'd, though in chains.
Sir Walt. You also know"——

Dang. Mr. Puff, as he knows all this, why does Sir Walter go on telling him?

Puff. But the audience are not supposed to know anything of the matter, are they?

Sneer. True; but I think you manage ill: for there certainly appears no reason why Sir Walter should be so communicative.

Puff. 'Fore Gad, now, that is one of the most ungrateful observations I ever heard!—for the less inducement he has to tell all this, the more, I think, you ought to be obliged to him; for I am sure you'd know nothing of the matter without it.

Dang. That's very true, upon my word.

Puff. But you will find he was not going on.

"*Sir Christ.* Enough, enough—'tis plain—and I no more
Am in amazement lost!"——

Puff. Here, now you see, Sir Christopher did not in fact ask any one question for his own information.

Sneer. No, indeed: his has been a most disinterested curiosity!

Dang. Really, I find, we are very much obliged to them both.

Puff. To be sure you are. Now then for the commander-in-chief, the Earl of Leicester, who, you know, was no favourite but of the queen's.—We left off—*in amazement lost!*

"*Sir Christ.* Am in amazement lost.
But, see where noble Leicester comes! supreme
In honours and command.
Sir Walt. And yet, methinks,
At such a time, so perilous, so fear'd,
That staff might well become an abler grasp.
Sir Christ. And so, by Heaven! think I; but soft, he's here!"

Puff. Ay, they envy him!

Sneer. But who are these with him?

Puff. Oh! very valiant knights: one is the governor of the fort, the other the master of the horse. And now, I think, you shall hear some better language: I was obliged to be plain and intelligible in the first scene, because there was so much matter of fact in it; but now, i'faith, you have trope, figure, and metaphor, as plenty as noun-substantives.

"*Enter* EARL OF LEICESTER, GOVERNOR, MASTER OF THE HORSE, KNIGHTS, &c.

Leic . . How's this, my friends! is't thus your new-fledged zeal
And plumèd valour moulds in roosted sloth?
Why dimly glimmers that heroic flame,
Whose reddening blaze, by patriot spirit fed,
Should be the beacon of a kindling realm?
Can the quick current of a patriot heart
Thus stagnate in a cold and weedy converse,
Or freeze in tideless inactivity?
No! rather let the fountain of your valour
Spring through each stream of enterprise,
Each petty channel of conducive daring,
Till the full torrent of your foaming wrath
O'erwhelm the flats of sunk hostility!"

Puff. There it is—followed up!

"*Sir Walt.* No more!—the freshening breath of thy rebuke
Hath fill'd the swelling canvas of our souls!
And thus, though fate should cut the cable of
[*All take hands.*
Our topmost hopes, in friendship's closing line
We'll grapple with despair, and if we fall,
We'll fall in glory's wake!

Leic. . . There spoke old England's genius!
Then, are we all resolved?

All. . . We are—all resolved.

Leic. . . To conquer—or be free?

All. . . To conquer, or be free.

Leic. . . All?

All. . . All."

Dang. Nem. con. egad!

Puff. O yes!—where they do agree on the stage, their unanimity is wonderful!

"*Leic.* . . Then let's embrace—and now—— [*Kneels.*"

Sneer. What the plague, is he going to pray?

Puff. Yes; hush!—in great emergencies, there is nothing like a prayer.

"*Leic.* . . O mighty Mars!"

Dang. But why should he pray to Mars?

Puff. Hush!

"*Leic.* . . If in thy homage bred,
Each point of discipline I've still observed;
Nor but by due promotion, and the right
Of service, to the rank of major-general
Have risen; assist thy votary now!
Gov. . . . Yet do not rise—hear me! [*Kneels.*
Mast. . . And me! [*Kneels.*
Knight. . . And me! [*Kneels.*
Sir Walt. . And me! [*Kneels.*
Sir Christ. And me! [*Kneels.*"

Puff. Now pray altogether.

"*All.* . . . Behold thy votaries submissive beg,
That thou wilt deign to grant them all they ask;
Assist them to accomplish all their ends,
And sanctify whatever means they use
To gain them!"

Sneer. A very orthodox quintetto!

Puff. Vastly well, gentlemen!—Is that well managed or not? Have you such a prayer as that on the stage?

Sneer. Not exactly.

Leic. [*To* PUFF.] But, sir, you haven't settled how we are to get off here.

Puff. You could not go off kneeling, could you?

Sir Walt. [*To* PUFF.] O no, sir; impossible!

Puff. It would have a good effect, i'faith, if you could exeunt praying!—Yes, and would vary the established mode of springing off with a glance at the pit.

Sneer. Oh, never mind, so as you get them off!—I'll answer for it, the audience won't care how.

Puff. Well, then, repeat the last line standing, and go off the old way.

"*All.* . . . And sanctify whatever means we use
To gain them. [*Exeunt.*'

Dang. Bravo! a fine exit.

Sneer. Well, really, Mr. Puff——

Puff. Stay a moment!

"*The* SENTINELS *get up.*

1 Sent. . . All this shall to Lord Burleigh's ear.
2 Sent. . . 'Tis meet it should. [*Exeunt.*"

Dang. Hey!—why, I thought those fellows had been asleep?

Puff. Only a pretence; there's the art of it: they were spies of Lord Burleigh's.

Sneer. But isn't it odd they never were taken notice of, not even by the commander-in-chief?

Puff. O lud, sir! if people, who want to listen or overhear, were not always connived at in a tragedy, there would be no carrying on any plot in the world.

Dang. That's certain!

Puff. But take care, my dear Dangle! the morning-gun is going to fire. [*Cannon fires.*

Dang. Well, that will have a fine effect!

Puff. I think so, and helps to realize the scene.—[*Cannon twice.*] What the plague! three morning guns! there never is but one!—Ay, this is always the way at the theatre: give these fellows a good thing, and they never know when to have done with it.—You have no more cannon to fire?

Und. Promp. [*Within.*] No, sir.

Puff. Now, then, for soft music.

Sneer. Pray what's that for?

Puff. It shows that Tilburina is coming;—nothing introduces you a heroine like soft music. Here she comes!

Dang. And her confidant, I suppose?

Puff. To be sure! Here they are—inconsolable to the minuet in Ariadne! [*Soft music.*

"*Enter* TILBURINA *and* CONFIDANT.

Till. . . Now has the whispering breath of gentle morn
Bid Nature's voice and Nature's beauty rise;
While orient Phœbus, with unborrow'd hues,
Clothes the waked loveliness which all night slept
In heavenly drapery! Darkness is fled.
Now flowers unfold their beauties to the sun,
And, blushing, kiss the beam he sends to wake them—
The striped carnation, and the guarded rose,
The vulgar wallflower, and smart gillyflower,
The polyanthus mean—the dapper daisy,
Sweet-william, and sweet marjoram—and all
The tribe of single and of double pinks!
Now, too, the feather'd warblers tune their notes
Around, and charm the listening grove. The lark!
The linnet! chaffinch! bullfinch! goldfinch! greenfinch!
But O, to me no joy can they afford!
Nor rose, nor wallflower, nor smart gillyflower,
Nor polyanthus mean, nor dapper daisy,
Nor William sweet, nor marjoram—nor lark,
Linnet, nor all the finches of the grove!"

Puff. Your white handkerchief, madam!——

Till. I thought, sir, I wasn't to use that till *heart-rending woe.*

Puff. O yes, madam, at *the finches of the grove*, if you please.

" *Till.* . . . . Nor lark,
Linnet, nor all the finches of the grove! [*Weeps.*"

Puff. Vastly well, madam!

Dang. Vastly well, indeed!

" *Tilb.* . . For, O, too sure, heart-rending woe is now
The lot of wretched Tilburina!"

Dang. Oh!—'tis too much!

Sneer. Oh!—it is indeed!

" *Con.* . . Be comforted, sweet lady; for who knows,
But Heaven has yet some milk-white day in store?
Tilb. . . Alas! my gentle Nora,
Thy tender youth as yet hath never mourn'd
Love's fatal dart. Else wouldst thou know, that when
The soul is sunk in comfortless despair,
It cannot taste of merriment."

Dang. That's certain!

" *Con.* . . But see where your stern father comes:
It is not meet that he should find you thus."

Puff. Hey, what the plague!—what a cut is here! Why, what is become of the description of her first meeting with Don Whiskerandos—his gallant behaviour in the sea-fight—and the simile of the canary-bird?

Tilb. Indeed, sir, you'll find they will not be missed.

Puff. Very well, very well!

Tilb. [*To* CONFIDANT.] The cue, ma'am, if you please.

" *Con.* . . It is not meet that he should find you thus.
Tilb. . . Thou counsel'st right; but 'tis no easy task
For barefaced grief to wear a mask of joy.

Enter GOVERNOR.

Gov. . . How's this!—in tears?—O Tilburina, shame!
Is this a time for maudling tenderness,
And Cupid's baby woes?—Hast thou not heard
That haughty Spain's pope-consecrated fleet
Advances to our shores, while England's fate,
Like a clipp'd guinea, trembles in the scale?
Tilb. . . Then is the crisis of my fate at hand!
I see the fleets approach—I see——"

Puff. Now, pray, gentlemen, mind. This is one of the most useful figures we tragedy writers have, by which a hero or heroine, in consideration of their being often obliged to overlook things that are on the stage, is allowed to hear and see a number of things that are not.

Sneer. Yes; a kind of poetical second-sight!

Puff. Yes.—Now then, madam.

" *Tilb.* . I see their decks
Are clear'd!—I see the signal made!
The line is form'd!—a cable's length asunder!
I see the frigates station'd in the rear;

And now, I hear the thunder of the guns!
I hear the victors' shouts—I also hear
The vanquish'd groan!—and now 'tis smoke—and now
I see the loose sails shiver in the wind!
I see—I see—what soon you'll see——
Gov. . . Hold, daughter! peace! this love hath turn'd thy brain:
The Spanish fleet thou canst not see—because
—It is not yet in sight!"

Dang. Egad, though, the governor seems to make no allowance for this poetical figure you talk of.

Puff. No, a plain matter-of-fact man;—that's his character.

"*Tilb.* . But will you then refuse his offer?
Gov. . . I must—I will—I can—I ought—I do.
Tilb. . . Think what a noble price.
Gov. . . No more—you urge in vain.
Tilb. . . His liberty is all he asks."

Sneer. All who asks, Mr. Puff? Who is——

Puff. Egad, sir, I can't tell! Here has been such cutting and slashing, I don't know where they have got to myself.

Tilb. Indeed, sir, you will find it will connect very well.

"—And your reward secure."

Puff. Oh, if they hadn't been so devilish free with their cutting here, you would have found that Don Whiskerandos has been tampering for his liberty, and has persuaded Tilburina to make this proposal to her father. And now, pray observe the conciseness with which the argument is conducted. Egad, the *pro* and *con* goes as smart as hits in a fencing-match. It is indeed a sort of small-sword logic, which we have borrowed from the French.

"*Tilb.* . A retreat in Spain!
Gov. . . Outlawry here!
Tilb. . . Your daughter's prayer!
Gov. . . Your father's oath.
Tilb. . . My lover!
Gov. . . My country!
Tilb. . . Tilburina!
Gov. . . England!
Tilb. . . A title!
Gov. . . Honour!
Tilb. . . A pension!
Gov. . . Conscience!
Tilb. . . A thousand pounds!
Gov. . . Ha! thou hast touch'd me nearly!"

Puff. There you see—she threw in *Tilburina*. Quick, parry quarte with *England!* Ha! thrust in tierce *a title!*—parried by *honour*. Ha! *a pension* over the arm!—put by by *conscience*. Then flankonade with *a thousand pounds*—and a palpable hit, egad!

" *Tilb.* . Canst thou—
Reject the suppliant, and the daughter too?
Gov. . . No more; I would not hear thee plead in vain:
The father softens—but the governor
Is fix'd! [*Exit.*"

Dang. Ay, that antithesis of persons is a most established figure.

" *Tilb.* . 'Tis well,—hence then, fond hopes,—fond passion hence;
Duty, behold I am all over thine——
Whisk. . [*Without.*] Where is my love—my——
Tilb. . . Ha!

Enter DON FEROLO WHISKERANDOS.

Whisk. . My beauteous enemy!——"

Puff. O dear, ma'am, you must start a great deal more than that! Consider, you had just determined in favour of duty—when, in a moment, the sound of his voice revives your passion—overthrows your resolution—destroys your obedience. If you don't express all that in your start, you do nothing at all.

Tilb. Well, we'll try again.

Dang. Speaking from within has always a fine effect.

Sneer. Very.

" *Whisk.* . My conquering Tilburina! How! is't thus
We meet? why are thy looks averse? what means
That falling tear—that frown of boding woe?
Ha! now indeed I am a prisoner!
Yes, now I feel the galling weight of these
Disgraceful chains—which, cruel Tilburina!
Thy doating captive gloried in before.—
But thou art false, and Whiskerandos is undone!
Tilb. . . O no! how little dost thou know thy Tilburina!
Whisk. . Art thou then true?—Begone cares, doubts, and fears,
I make you all a present to the winds;
And if the winds reject you—try the waves."

Puff. The wind, you know, is the established receiver of all stolen sighs, and cast-off griefs and apprehensions.

" *Tilb.* . Yet must we part!—stern duty seals our doom:
Though here I call yon conscious clouds to witness,
Could I pursue the bias of my soul,
All friends, all right of parents, I'd disclaim,
And thou, my Whiskerandos, shouldst be father
And mother, brother, cousin, uncle, aunt,
And friend to me!
Whisk. . Oh, matchless excellence! and must we part?
Well, if—we must—we must—and in that case
The less is said the better."

Puff. Heyday! here's a cut!—What, are all the mutual protestations out?

Tilb. Now, pray, sir, don't interrupt us just here: you ruin our feelings.

Puff. Your feelings!—but zounds, my feelings, ma'am!

Sneer. No; pray don't interrupt them.

"*Whisk.* . One last embrace.
Tilb. . . Now,—farewell, for ever.
Whisk. . For ever!
Tilb. . . Ay, for ever! [*Going.*"

Puff. 'Sdeath and fury!—Gad's life!—sir! madam! if you go out without the parting look, you might as well dance out. Here, here!

Con. But pray, sir, how am I to get off here?

Puff. You! pshaw! what the devil signifies how you get off! edge away at the top, or where you will—[*Pushes the* CONFIDANT *off.*] Now, ma'am, you see—

Tilb. We understand you, sir.

"Ay, for ever.
Both. . . Oh!" [*Turning back, and exeunt.—Scene closes.*"

Dang. Oh, charming!

Puff. Hey!—'tis pretty well, I believe: you see I don't attempt to strike out anything new—but I take it I improve on the established modes.

Sneer. You do indeed! But pray is not Queen Elizabeth to appear?

Puff. No, not once—but she is to be talked of for ever; so that, egad, you'll think a hundred times that she is on the point of coming in.

Sneer. Hang it, I think it's a pity to keep her in the green room all the night.

Puff. O no, that always has a fine effect—it keeps up expectation.

Dang. But are we not to have a battle?

Puff. Yes, yes, you will have a battle at last: but, egad, it's not to be by land, but by sea—and that is the only quite new thing in the piece.

Dang. What, Drake at the Armada, hey?

Puff. Yes, i'faith—fire-ships and all; then we shall end with the procession. Hey, that will do, I think?

Sneer. No doubt on't.

Puff. Come, we must not lose time; so now for the underplot.

Sneer. What the plague, have you another plot?

Puff. O Lord, yes; ever while you live have two plots to your tragedy. The grand point in managing them is only to

let your under-plot have as little connection with your main-plot as possible.—I flatter myself nothing can be more distinct than mine; for as in my chief plot the characters are all great people, I have laid my under-plot in low life, and as the former is to end in deep distress, I make the other end as happy as a farce.—Now, Mr. Hopkins, as soon as you please.

Enter UNDER PROMPTER.

Under Promp. Sir, the carpenter says it is impossible you can go to the park scene yet.

Puff. The park scene! no! I mean the description scene here, in the wood.

Under Promp. Sir, the performers have cut it out.

Puff. Cut it out!

Under Promp. Yes, sir.

Puff. What! the whole account of Queen Elizabeth?

Under Promp. Yes, sir.

Puff. And the description of her horse and side-saddle?

Under Promp. Yes, sir.

Puff. So, so; this is very fine indeed!—Mr. Hopkins, how the plague could you suffer this?

Mr. Hop. [*Within.*] Sir, indeed the pruning-knife——

Puff. The pruning-knife—zounds!—the axe! Why, here has been such lopping and topping, I shan't have the bare trunk of my play left presently!—Very well, sir—the performers must do as they please; but, upon my soul, I'll print it every word.

Sneer. That I would, indeed.

Puff. Very well, sir; then we must go on.—Zounds! I would not have parted with the description of the horse!—Well, sir, go on.—Sir, it was one of the finest and most laboured things.—Very well, sir; let them go on.—There you had him and his accoutrements, from the bit to the crupper.—Very well, sir; we must go to the park scene.

Under Promp. Sir, there is the point: the carpenters say, that unless there is some business put in here before the drop, they shan't have time to clear away the fort, or sink Gravesend and the river.

Puff. So! this is a pretty dilemma, truly!—Gentlemen, you must excuse me—these fellows will never be ready, unless I go and look after them myself.

Sneer. O dear, sir, these little things will happen.

Puff. To cut out this scene!—but I'll print it—egad I'll print it every word! [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Theatre, before the Curtain.*

Enter PUFF, SNEER, *and* DANGLE.

Puff. Well, we are ready; now then for the justices.

[*Curtain rises.*

"JUSTICES, CONSTABLES, &c., *discovered.*"

Sneer. This, I suppose, is a sort of senate scene.

Puff. To be sure; there has not been one yet.

Dang. It is the under-plot, isn't it?

Puff. Yes.—What, gentlemen, do you mean to go at once to the discovery scene?

Just. If you please, sir.

Puff. Oh, very well!—Hark'ee, I don't choose to say anything more; but, i'faith they have mangled my play in a most shocking manner.

Dang. It's a great pity!

Puff. Now, then, Mr. Justice, if you please.

"*Just.* . . Are all the volunteers without?
Const. . . . They are.
Some ten in fetters, and some twenty drunk.
Just. . . Attends the youth, whose most opprobrious fame
And clear convicted crimes have stamp'd him soldier?
Const. . . He waits your pleasure; eager to repay
The best reprieve that sends him to the fields
Of glory, there to raise his branded hand
In honour's cause.
Just. . . . 'Tis well—'tis justice arms him!
Oh! may he now defend his country's laws
With half the spirit he has broke them all!
If 'tis your worship's pleasure, bid him enter.
Const. . . I fly, the herald of your will. [*Exit.*"

Puff. Quick, sir.

Sneer. But, Mr. Puff, I think not only the Justice, but the clown seems to talk in as high a style as the first hero among them.

Puff. Heaven forbid they should not in a free country!—Sir, I am not for making slavish distinctions, and giving all the fine language to the upper sort of people.

Dang. That's very noble in you, indeed.

"*Enter* JUSTICE'S LADY."

Puff. Now, pray mark this scene.

Lady. . Forgive this interruption, good my love;
But as I just now pass'd a prisoner youth,
Whom rude hands hither lead, strange bodings seized
My fluttering heart, and to myself I said,
An' if our Tom had lived, he'd surely been
This stripling's height!

Just. . . Ha! sure some powerful sympathy directs
Us both——

Re-enter CONSTABLE *with* SON.

What is thy name?

Son. . . . My name is Tom Jenkins—*alias* have I none—
Though orphan'd, and without a friend!

Just. . . . Thy parents?

Son. . . . My father dwelt in Rochester—and was,
As I have heard—a fishmonger—no more."

Puff. What, sir, do you leave out the account of your birth, parentage, and education?

Son. They have settled it so, sir, here.

Puff. Oh! oh!

"*Lady.* . How loudly nature whispers to my heart
Had he no other name?

Son. . . . . I've seen a bill
Of his sign'd Tomkins, creditor

Just. . . This does indeed confirm each circumstance
The gipsy told!—Prepare!

Son. . . . . I do.

Just. . . No orphan, nor without a friend art thou—
I am thy father; here's thy mother; there
Thy uncle—this thy first cousin, and those
Are all your near relations!

Lady. . . O ecstasy of bliss!

Son. . . . O most unlook'd for happiness!

Just. . . O wonderful event! [*They faint alternately in each other's arms.*"

Puff. There, you see relationship, like murder, will out.

"*Just.* . Now let's revive—else were this joy too much!
But come—and we'll unfold the rest within;
And thou, my boy, must needs want rest and food.
Hence may each orphan hope, as chance directs,
To find a father—where he least expects! [*Exeunt.*"

Puff. What do you think of that?

Dang. One of the finest discovery-scenes I ever saw!—Why, this under-plot would have made a tragedy itself.

Sneer. Ay, or a comedy either.

Puff. And keeps quite clear you see of the other.

Enter SCENEMEN, *taking away the seats.*

Puff. The scene remains, does it?

Sceneman. Yes, sir.

Puff. You are to leave one chair, you know.—But it is always awkward in a tragedy, to have you fellows coming in in your playhouse liveries to remove things.—I wish that could be managed better.—So now for my mysterious yeoman.

"*Enter* BEEFEATER.

Ref. . . . Perdition catch my soul, but I do love thee."

Sneer. Haven't I heard that line before?

Puff. No, I fancy not.—Where, pray?

Dang. Yes, I think there is something like it in Othello.

Puff. Gad! now you put me in mind on't, I believe there is—but that's of no consequence; all that can be said is, that two people happened to hit upon the same thought—and Shakspeare made use of it first, that's all.

Sneer. Very true.

Puff. Now, sir, your soliloquy—but speak more to the pit, if you please—the soliloquy always to the pit, that's a rule.

"*Beef.* . . Though hopeless love finds comfort in despair,
It never can endure a rival's bliss!
But soft—I am observed. [*Exit.*"

Dang. That's a very short soliloquy.

Puff. Yes—but it would have been a great deal longer if he had not been observed.

Sneer. A most sentimental Beefeater that, Mr. Puff!

Puff. Hark'ee—I would not have you be too sure that he is a Beefeater.

Sneer. What, a hero in disguise?

Puff. No matter—I only give you a hint. But now for my principal character. Here he comes—Lord Burleigh in person! Pray, gentlemen, step this way—softly—I only hope the Lord High Treasurer is perfect—if he is but perfect!

"*Enter* LORD BURLEIGH, *goes slowly to a chair, and sits.*"

Sneer. Mr. Puff!

Puff. Hush!—Vastly well, sir! vastly well! a most interesting gravity!

Dang. What, isn't he to speak at all?

Puff. Egad, I thought you'd ask me that!—Yes, it is a very likely thing—that a minister in his situation, with the whole affairs of the nation on his head, should have time to talk!—But hush! or you'll put him out.

Sneer. Put him out; how the plague can that be, if he's not going to say anything!

Puff. There's the reason! why, his part is to think; and how the plague do you imagine he can think if you keep talking?

Dang. That's very true, upon my word!

"LORD BURLEIGH *comes forward, shakes his head, and exit.*"

Sneer. He is very perfect indeed! Now, pray what did he mean by that?

Puff. You don't take it?

Sneer. No, I don't, upon my soul.

Puff. Why, by that shake of the head, he gave you to understand that even though they had more justice in their cause, and wisdom in their measures—yet, if there was not a greater spirit shown on the part of the people, the country would at last fall a sacrifice to the hostile ambition of the Spanish monarchy.

Sneer. The devil! did he mean all that by shaking his head?

Puff. Every word of it—if he shook his head as I taught him.

Dang. Ah! there certainly is a vast deal to be done on the stage by dumb show and expression of face; and a judicious author knows how much he may trust to it.

Sneer. Oh, here are some of our old acquaintance.

"*Enter* SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON *and* SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

Sir Christ. My niece and your niece too!
By Heaven! there's witchcraft in't.—He could not else
Have gain'd their hearts.—But see where they approach:
Some horrid purpose lowering on their brows!
Sir Walt. Let us withdraw and mark them. [*They withdraw.*"

Sneer. What is all this?

Puff. Ah! here has been more pruning!—but the fact is, these two young ladies are also in love with Don Whiskerandos.—Now, gentlemen, this scene goes entirely for what we call situation and stage effect, by which the greatest applause may be obtained, without the assistance of language, sentiment, or character: pray mark!

"*Enter the two* NIECES.

1st Niece. Ellena here!
She is his scorn as much as I—that is
Some comfort still!"

Puff. O dear, madam, you are not to say that to her face!—aside, ma'am, aside.—The whole scene is to be aside.

"*1st Niece.* She is his scorn as much as I—that is
Some comfort still. [*Aside.*
2nd Niece. I know he prizes not Pollina's love;
But Tilburina lords it o'er his heart. [*Aside.*
1st Niece. But see the proud destroyer of my peace.
Revenge is all the good I've left. [*Aside.*
2nd Niece. He comes, the false disturber of my quiet.
Now, vengeance do thy worst. [*Aside.*

Enter DON FEROLO WHISKERANDOS.

Whisk. O hateful liberty—if thus in vain
I seek my Tilburina!
Both Nieces. . . . And ever shalt!

SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON *and* SIR WALTER RALEIGH *come forward.*

Sir Christ. and Sir Walt. Hold! we will avenge you.
Whisk. . . Hold *you*—or see your nieces bleed!

[*The two* NIECES *draw their two daggers to strike* WHISKERANDOS: *the two* UNCLES *at the instant, with their two swords drawn, catch their two* NIECES' *arms, and turn the points of their swords to* WHISKERANDOS, *who immediately draws two daggers, and holds them to the two* NIECES' *bosoms.*"

Puff. There's situation for you! there's an heroic group!—You see the ladies can't stab Whiskerandos—he durst not strike them, for fear of their uncles—the uncles durst not kill him, because of their nieces—I have them all at a dead lock!—for every one of them is afraid to let go first.

Sneer. Why, then they must stand there for ever!

Puff. So they would, if I hadn't a very fine contrivance for't.—Now mind——

"*Enter* BEEFEATER, *with his halbert.*

Beef. . . In the queen's name I charge you all to drop
Your swords and daggers!
[*They drop their swords and daggers.*"

Sneer. That is a contrivance indeed!

Puff. Ay—in the queen's name.

"*Sir Christ.* Come, niece!
Sir Walter. Come, niece! [*Exeunt with the two* NIECES:
Whisk. . . What's he, who bids us thus renounce our guard?
Beef. . . . Thou must do more—renounce thy love!
Whisk. . . Thou liest—base Beefeater!
Beef. . . . Ha! hell! the lie!
By Heaven thou'st roused the lion in my heart!
Off, yeoman's habit!—base disguise! off! off!
[*Discovers himself, by throwing off his upper dress, and appearing in a very fine waistcoat.*
Am I a Beefeater now?
Or beams my crest as terrible as when
In Biscay's Bay I took thy captive sloop?"

Puff. There, egad! he comes out to be the very captain of the privateer who had taken Whiskerandos prisoner—and was himself an old lover of Tilburina's.

Dang. Admirably managed, indeed!

Puff. Now, stand out of their way.

Whisk. . . I thank thee, Fortune, that hast thus bestowed
A weapon to chastise this insolent. [*Takes up one of the swords.*
Beef. . . . I take thy challenge, Spaniard, and I thank thee,
Fortune, too! [*Takes up the other sword.*"

Dang. That's excellently contrived!—It seems as if the two uncles had left their swords on purpose for them.

Puff. No, egad, they could not help leaving them.

" *Whisk.* . Vengeance and Tilburina !
Beef. Exactly so——

[*They fight—and after the usual number of wounds given,* WHISKERANDOS *falls.*

Whisk. . . O cursed parry !—that last thrust in tierce
Was fatal.—Captain, thou hast fenced well !
And Whiskerandos quits this bustling scene
For all eter——
Beef. . . ——nity—he would have added, but stern death
Cut short his being, and the noun at once !"

Puff. Oh, my dear sir, you are too slow : now mind me.—Sir, shall I trouble you to die again ?

" *Whisk.* . And Whiskerandos quits this bustling scene
For all eter——
Beef. . . . ——nity—he would have added,——"

Puff. No, sir—that's not it—once more, if you please.

Whisk. I wish, sir, you would practise this without me—I can't stay dying here all night.

Puff. Very well ; we'll go over it by-and-by.—[*Exit* WHISKERANDOS.] I must humour these gentlemen !

" *Beef.* . . Farewell, brave Spaniard ! and when next——"

Puff. Dear sir, you needn't speak that speech, as the body has walked off.

Beef. That's true, sir—then I'll join the fleet.

Puff. If you please.—[*Exit* BEEFEATER.] Now, who comes on ?

" *Enter* GOVERNOR, *with his hair properly disordered.*

Gov. . . . . A hemisphere of evil planets reign !
And every planet sheds contagious frenzy !
My Spanish prisoner is slain ! my daughter,
Meeting the dead corse borne along, has gone
Distract ! [*A loud flourish of trumpets.*
But hark ! I am summon'd to the fort :
Perhaps the fleets have met ! amazing crisis !
O Tilburina ! from thy aged father's beard
Thou'st pluck'd the few brown hairs which time had left !
[*Exit.*"

Sneer. Poor gentleman !

Puff. Yes—and no one to blame but his daughter !

Dang. And the planets——

Puff. True.—Now enter Tilburina !

Sneer. Egad, the business comes on quick here.

Puff. Yes, sir—now she comes in stark mad in white satin.

Sneer. Why in white satin ?

Puff. O Lord, sir—when a heroine goes mad, she always goes into white satin.—Don't she, Dangle?

Dang. Always—it's a rule.

Puff. Yes—here it is—[*Looking at the book.*] "Enter Tilburina stark mad in white satin, and her confidant stark mad in white linen."

"*Enter* TILBURINA *and* CONFIDANT, *mad, according to custom.*"

Sneer. But, what the deuce, is the confidant to be mad too?

Puff. To be sure she is: the confidant is always to do whatever her mistress does; weep when she weeps, smile when she smiles, go mad when she goes mad.—Now, Madam Confidant—but keep your madness in the background, if you please.

"*Til.* . . The wind whistles—the moon rises—see,
They have kill'd my squirrel in his cage:
Is this a grasshopper?—Ha! no; it is my
Whiskerandos—you shall not keep him—
I know you have him in your pocket—
An oyster may be cross'd in love!—who says
A whale's a bird?—Ha! did you call, my love?—
He's here! he's there!—He's everywhere!
Ah me! he's nowhere! [*Exit.*"

Puff. There, do you ever desire to see anybody madder than that?

Sneer. Never, while I live!

Puff. You observed how she mangled the metre?

Dang. Yes—egad, it was the first thing made me suspect she was out of her senses!

Sneer. And pray what becomes of her?

Puff. She is gone to throw herself into the sea, to be sure—and that brings us at once to the scene of action, and so to my catrastrophe—my sea-fight, I mean.

Sneer. What, you bring that in at last?

Puff. Yes, yes—you know my play is called *The Spanish Armada;* otherwise, egad, I have no occasion for the battle at all.—Now then for my magnificence!—my battle!—my noise!—and my procession!—You are all ready?

Und. Promp. [*Within.*] Yes, sir.

Puff. Is the Thames dressed?

"*Enter* THAMES *with two* ATTENDANTS."

Thames. Here I am, sir.

Puff. Very well, indeed!—See, gentlemen, there's a river for you!—This is blending a little of the masque with my tragedy—a new fancy, you know—and very useful in my case; for as

there must be a procession, I suppose Thames, and all his tributary rivers, to compliment Britannia with a fête in honour of the victory.

Sneer. But pray, who are these gentlemen in green with him?

Puff. Those?—those are his banks.

Sneer. His banks?

Puff. Yes, one crowned with alders, and the other with a villa!—you take the allusions?—But hey! what the plague! you have got both your banks on one side.—Here, sir, come round.—Ever while you live, Thames, go between your banks. —[*Bell rings.*] There, so! now for't!—Stand aside, my dear friends!—Away, Thames!

[*Exit* THAMES *between his banks.*

[*Flourish of drums, trumpets, cannon, &c., &c. Scene changes to the sea—the fleets engage—the music plays—"Britons strike home."—Spanish fleet destroyed by fire-ships, &c.—English fleet advances—music plays "Rule Britannia."—The procession of all the English rivers, and their tributaries, with their emblems, &c., begins with Handel's water music, ends with a chorus to the march in Judas Maccabæus.—During this scene,* PUFF *directs and applauds everything—then*

Puff. Well, pretty well—but not quite perfect. So, ladies and gentlemen, if you please, we'll rehearse this piece again to-morrow. [*Curtain drops.*

A TRIP TO SCARBOROUGH.

A COMEDY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AS ORIGINALLY ACTED AT DRURY-LANE THEATRE IN 1777.

LORD FOPPINGTON	*Mr. Dodd.*	SHOEMAKER	*Mr. Carpenter.*
SIR TUNBELLY CLUMSY	*Mr. Moody.*	TAILOR	*Mr. Parker.*
COLONEL TOWNLY	*Mr. Brereton.*	AMANDA	*Mrs. Robinson.*
LOVELESS	*Mr. Smith.*	BERINTHIA	*Miss Farren.*
TOM FASHION	*Mr. J. Palmer.*	MISS HOYDEN	*Mrs. Abington*
LA VAROLE	*Mr. Burton.*	MRS. COUPLER	*Mrs. Booth.*
LORY	*Mr. Baddeley.*	NURSE	*Mrs. Bradshaw.*
PROBE	*Mr. Parsons.*		
MENDLEGS	*Mr. Norris.*	SEMPSTRESS, POSTILION, MAID, *and* SERVANTS.	
JEWELLER	*Mr. Lamash.*		

SCENE—SCARBOROUGH AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD.

PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MR. KING.

WHAT various transformations we remark,
From east Whitechapel to the west Hyde Park!
Men, women, children, houses, signs, and fashions,
State, stage, trade, taste, the humours and the passions;
The Exchange, 'Change Alley, wheresoe'er you're ranging,
Court, city, country, all are changed or changing:
The streets, some time ago, were paved with stones,
Which, aided by a hackney-coach, half broke your bones.
The purest lovers then indulged in bliss;
They run great hazard if they stole a kiss.
One chaste salute!—the damsel cried—Oh, fie!
As they approach'd—slap went the coach awry—
Poor Sylvia got a bump, and Damon a black eye.
But now weak nerves in hackney-coaches roam,
And the cramm'd glutton snores, unjolted, home:
Of former times, that polish'd thing a beau,
Is metamorphosed now from top to toe;
Then the full flaxen wig, spread o'er the shoulders,
Conceal'd the shallow head from the beholders.

But now the whole's reversed—each fop appears,
Cropp'd and trimm'd up, exposing head and ears:
The buckle then its modest limits knew,
Now, like the ocean, dreadful to the view,
Hath broke its bounds, and swallows up the shoe:
The wearer's foot, like his once fine estate,
Is almost lost, the encumbrance is so great.
Ladies may smile—are they not in the plot?
The bounds of nature have not they forgot?
Were they design'd to be, when put together,
Made up, like shuttlecocks, of cork and feather?
Their pale-faced grandmammas appear'd with grace
When dawning blushes rose upon the face;
No blushes now their once-loved station seek;
The foe is in possession of the cheek!
No heads of old, too high in feather'd state,
Hinder'd the fair to pass the lowest gate;
A church to enter now, they must be bent,
If ever they should try the experiment.
As change thus circulates throughout the nation,
Some plays may justly call for alteration;
At least to draw some slender covering o'er,
That *graceless wit** which was too bare before:
Those writers well and wisely use their pens,
Who turn our wantons into Magdalens;
And howsoever wicked wits revile 'em,
We hope to find in you their stage asylum.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Hall of an Inn.*

Enter TOM FASHION *and* LORY, POSTILION *following with a portmanteau.*

Fash. Lory, pay the postboy, and take the portmanteau.

Lory. [*Aside to* TOM FASHION.] Faith, sir, we had better let the postboy take the portmanteau and pay himself.

Fash. [*Aside to* LORY.] Why, sure, there's something left in it!

Lory. Not a rag, upon my honour, sir! We eat the last of your wardrobe at Newmalton—and, if we had had twenty miles further to go, our next meal must have been of the cloak-bag.

Fash. Why, 'sdeath, it appears full!

* "And *Vane* wants grace, who never wanted wit."—POPE.

Lory. Yes, sir—I made bold to stuff it with hay, to save appearances, and look like baggage.

Fash. [*Aside.*] What the devil shall I do?—[*Aloud.*] Hark'ee, boy, what's the chaise?

Post. Thirteen shillings, please your honour.

Fash. Can you give me change for a guinea?

Post. Oh, yes, sir.

Lory. [*Aside.*] So, what will he do now?—[*Aloud.*] Lord, sir, you had better let the boy be paid below.

Fash. Why, as you say, Lory, I believe it will be as well.

Lory. Yes, yes; I'll tell them to discharge you below, honest friend.

Post. Please your honour, there are the turnpikes too.

Fash. Ay, ay, the turnpikes by all means.

Post. And I hope your honour will order me something for myself.

Fash. To be sure; bid them give you a crown.

Lory. Yes, yes—my master doesn't care what you charge them—so get along, you——

Post. And there's the ostler, your honour.

Lory. Psha! damn the ostler!—would you impose upon the gentleman's generosity?—[*Pushes him out.*] A rascal, to be so cursed ready with his change!

Fash. Why, faith, Lory, he had nearly posed me.

Lory. Well, sir, we are arrived at Scarborough, not worth a guinea! I hope you'll own yourself a happy man—you have outlived all your cares.

Fash. How so, sir?

Lory. Why, you have nothing left to take care of.

Fash. Yes, sirrah, I have myself and you to take care of still.

Lory. Sir, if you could prevail with somebody else to do that for you, I fancy we might both fare the better for it. But now, sir, for my Lord Foppington, your elder brother.

Fash. Damn my eldest brother!

Lory. With all my heart; but get him to redeemy our annuity, however. Look you, sir; you must wheedle him, or you must starve.

Fash. Look you, sir; I would neither wheedle him nor starve.

Lory. Why, what will you do, then?

Fash. Cut his throat, or get some one to do it for me.

Lory. 'Gad so, sir, I'm glad to find I was not so well acquainted with the strength of your conscience as with the weakness of your purse.

Fash. Why, art thou so impenetrable a blockhead as to believe he'll help me with a farthing?

Lory. Not if you treat him *de haut en bas*, as you used to do.

Fash. Why, how wouldst have me treat him?

Lory. Like a trout—tickle him.

Fash. I can't flatter.

Lory. Can you starve?

Fash. Yes.

Lory. I can't. Good by t'ye, sir.

Fash. Stay—thou'lt distract me. But who comes here? My old friend, Colonel Townly.

Enter COLONEL TOWNLY.

My dear Colonel, I am rejoiced to meet you here.

Col. Town. Dear Tom, this is an unexpected pleasure! What, are you come to Scarborough to be present at your brother's wedding?

Lory. Ah, sir, if it had been his funeral, we should have come with pleasure.

Col. Town. What, honest Lory, are you with your master still?

Lory. Yes, sir; I have been starving with him ever since I saw your honour last.

Fash. Why, Lory is an attached rogue; there's no getting rid of him.

Lory. True, sir, as my master says, there's no seducing me from his service.—[*Aside.*] Till he's able to pay me my wages.

Fash. Go, go, sir, and take care of the baggage.

Lory. Yes, sir, the baggage!—O Lord! [*Takes up the portmanteau.*] I suppose, sir, I must charge the landlord to be very particular where he stows this?

Fash. Get along, you rascal.—[*Exit* LORY *with the portmanteau.*] But, Colonel, are you acquainted with my proposed sister-in-law?

Col. Town. Only by character. Her father, Sir Tunbelly Clumsy, lives within a quarter of a mile of this place, in a lonely old house, which nobody comes near. She never goes abroad, nor sees company at home; to prevent all misfortunes, she has her breeding within doors; the parson of the parish teaches her to play upon the dulcimer, the clerk to sing, her nurse to dress, and her father to dance;—in short, nobody has free admission there but our old acquaintance, Mother Coupler, who has procured your brother this match, and is, I believe, a distant relation of Sir Tunbelly's.

Fash. But is her fortune so considerable?

Col. Town. Three thousand a year, and a good sum of money, independent of her father, beside.

Fash. 'Sdeath! that my old acquaintance, Dame Coupler, could not have thought of me, as well as my brother, for such a prize.

Col. Town. Egad, I wouldn't swear that you are too late—his lordship, I know, hasn't yet seen the lady—and, I believe, has quarrelled with his patroness.

Fash. My dear Colonel, what an idea have you started!

Col. Town. Pursue it, if you can, and I promise you you shall have my assistance; for, besides my natural contempt for his lordship, I have at present the enmity of a rival towards him.

Fash. What, has he been addressing your old flame, the widow Berinthia?

Col. Town. Faith, Tom, I am at present most whimsically circumstanced. I came here a month ago to meet the lady you mention; but she failing in her promise, I, partly from pique and partly from idleness, have been diverting my chagrin by offering up incense to the beauties of Amanda, our friend Loveless's wife.

Fash. I never have seen her, but have heard her spoken of as a youthful wonder of beauty and prudence.

Col. Town. She is so indeed; and, Loveless being too careless and insensible of the treasure he possesses, my lodging in the same house has given me a thousand opportunities of making my assiduities acceptable; so that, in less than a fortnight, I began to bear my disappointment from the widow with the most Christian resignation.

Fash. And Berinthia has never appeared?

Col. Town. Oh, there's the perplexity! for, just as I began not to care whether I ever saw her again or not, last night she arrived.

Fash. And instantly resumed her empire.

Col. Town. No, faith—we met—but, the lady not condescending to give me any serious reasons for having fooled me for a month, I left her in a huff.

Fash. Well, well, I'll answer for it she'll soon resume her power, especially as friendship will prevent your pursuing the other too far.—But my coxcomb of a brother is an admirer of Amanda's too, is he?

Col. Town. Yes, and I believe is most heartily despised by her. But come with me, and you shall see her and your old friend Loveless.

Fash. I must pay my respects to his lordship—perhaps you can direct me to his lodgings.

Col. Town. Come with me; I shall pass by it.

Fash. I wish you could pay this visit for me, or could tell me what I should say to him.

Col. Town. Say nothing to him—apply yourself to his bag, his sword, his feather, his snuff-box; and when you are well with them, desire him to lend you a thousand pounds, and I'll engage you prosper.

Fash. 'Sdeath and furies! why was that coxcomb thrust into the world before me? O Fortune, Fortune, thou art a jilt, by Gad! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—LORD FOPPINGTON'S *Dressing-room.*

Enter LORD FOPPINGTON *in his dressing-gown, and* LA VAROLE.

Lord Fop. [*Aside.*] Well, 'tis an unspeakable pleasure to be a man of quality—strike me dumb! Even the boors of this northern spa have learned the respect due to a title.—[*Aloud.*] La Varole!

La Var. Milor——

Lord Fop. You han't yet been at Muddymoat Hall, to announce my arrival, have you?

La Var. Not yet, milor.

Lord Fop. Then you need not go till Saturday—[*Exit* LA VAROLE] as I am in no particular haste to view my intended sposa. I shall sacrifice a day or two more to the pursuit of my friend Loveless's wife. Amanda is a charming creature—strike me ugly! and, if I have any discernment in the world, she thinks no less of my Lord Foppington.

Re-enter LA VAROLE.

La Var. Milor, de shoemaker, de tailor, de hosier, de sempstress, de peru, be all ready, if your lordship please to dress.

Lord Fop. 'Tis well; admit them.

La Var. Hey, messieurs, entrez!

Enter TAILOR, SHOEMAKER, SEMPSTRESS, JEWELLER, *and* MENDLEGS.

Lord Fop. So, gentlemen, I hope you have all taken pains to show yourselves masters in your professions?

Tai. I think I may presume, sir——

La Var. Milor, you clown, you!

Tai. My lord—I ask your lordship's pardon, my lord. I hope, my lord, your lordship will be pleased to own I have brought your lordship as accomplished a suit of clothes as ever peer of England wore, my lord—will your lordship please to view 'em now?

Lord Fop. Ay; but let my people dispose the glasses so that I may see myself before and behind; for I love to see myself all round. [*Puts on his clothes.*

Enter TOM FASHION *and* LORY. *They remain behind, conversing apart.*

Fash. Heyday! what the devil have we here? Sure my gentleman's grown a favourite at court, he has got so many people at his levée.

Lory. Sir, these people come in order to make him a favourite at court—they are to establish him with the ladies.

Fash. Good Heaven! to what an ebb of taste are women fallen, that it should be in the power of a laced coat to recommend a gallant to them!

Lory. Sir, tailors and hair-dressers debauch all the women.

Fash. Thou sayest true. But now for my reception.

Lord Fop. [*To* TAILOR.] Death and eternal tortures! Sir—I say the coat is too wide here by a foot.

Tai. My lord, if it had been tighter, 'twould neither have hooked nor buttoned.

Lord Fop. Rat the hooks and buttons, sir! Can anything be worse than this? As Gad shall judge me, it hangs on my shoulders like a chairman's surtout.

Tai. 'Tis not for me to dispute your lordship's fancy.

Lory. There, sir, observe what respect does.

Fash. Respect! damn him for a coxcomb!—But let's accost him.—[*Coming forward.*] Brother, I'm your humble servant.

Lord Fop. O Lard, Tam! I did not expect you in England.—brother, I'm glad to see you.—But what has brought you to Scarborough, Tam?—[*To the* TAILOR.] Look you, sir, I shall never be reconciled to this nauseous wrapping-gown, therefore pray get me another suit with all possible expedition; for this is my eternal aversion.—[*Exit* TAILOR.] Well but, Tam, you don't tell me what has driven you to Scarborough.—Mrs. Calico, are not you of my mind?

Semp. Directly, my lord.—I hope your lordship is pleased with your ruffles?

Lord Fop. In love with them, stap my vitals!—Bring my bill, you shall be paid to-morrow.

Semp. I humbly thank your worship. [*Exit.*

Lord Fop. Hark thee, shoemaker, these shoes aren't ugly, but they don't fit me.

Shoe. My lord, I think they fit you very well.

Lord Fop. They hurt me just below the instep.

Shoe. [*Feels his foot.*] No, my lord, they don't hurt you there.

Lord Fop. I tell thee they pinch me execrably.

Shoe. Why then, my lord, if those shoes pinch you, I'll be damned.

Lord Fop. Why, will thou undertake to persuade me I cannot feel?

Shoe. Your lordship may please to feel what you think fit, but that shoe does not hurt you—I think I understand my trade.

Lord Fop. Now, by all that's good and powerful, thou art an incomprehensive coxcomb!—but thou makest good shoes, and so I'll bear with thee.

Shoe. My lord, I have worked for half the people of quality in this town these twenty years, and 'tis very hard I shouldn't know when a shoe hurts, and when it don't.

Lord Fop. Well, pr'ythee be gone about thy business.—[*Exit* SHOEMAKER.] Mr. Mendlegs, a word with you.—The calves of these stockings are thickened a little too much; they make my legs look like a porter's.

Mend. My lord, methinks they look mighty well.

Lord Fop. Ay, but you are not so good a judge of those things as I am—I have studied them all my life—therefore pray let the next be the thickness of a crown-piece less.

Mend. Indeed, my lord, they are the same kind I had the honour to furnish your lordship with in town.

Lord Fop. Very possibly, Mr. Mendlegs; but that was in the beginning of the winter, and you should always remember, Mr. Hosier, that if you make a nobleman's spring legs as robust as his autumnal calves, you commit a monstrous impropriety, and make no allowance for the fatigues of the winter.

[*Exit* MENDLEGS.

Jewel. I hope, my lord, these buckles have had the unspeakable satisfaction of being honoured with your lordship's approbation?

Lord Fop. Why, they are of a pretty fancy; but don't you think them rather of the smallest?

Jewel. My lord, they could not well be larger, to keep on your lordship's shoe.

Lord Fop. My good sir, you forget that these matters are not as they used to be; formerly, indeed, the buckle was a sort of machine, intended to keep on the shoe; but the case is now quite reversed, and the shoe is of no earthly use, but to keep on the buckle.—Now give me my watches, [SERVANT *fetches the watches,*] my chapeau, [SERVANT *brings a dress hat,*] my handkerchief, [SERVANT *pours some scented liquor on a handker-*

chief and brings it,] my snaff-box, [SERVANT *brings snuff-box.*] There, now the business of the morning is pretty well over.

[*Exit* JEWELLER.

Fash. [*Aside to* LORY.] Well, Lory, what dost think on't? —a very friendly reception from a brother, after three years' absence!

Lory. [*Aside to* TOM FASHION.] Why, sir, 'tis your own fault —here you have stood ever since you came in, and have not commended any one thing that belongs to him.

[SERVANTS *all go off.*

Fash. [*Aside to* LORY.] Nor ever shall, while they belong to a coxcomb—[*To* LORD FOPPINGTON] Now your people of business are gone, brother, I hope I may obtain a quarter of an hour's audience of you?

Lord Fop. Faith, Tam, I must beg you'll excuse me at this time, for I have an engagement which I would not break for the salvation of mankind.—Hey!—there!—is my carriage at the door?—You'll excuse me, brother. [*Going.*

Fash. Shall you be back to dinner?

Lord Fop. As Gad shall jedge me, I can't tell; for it is passible I may dine with some friends at Donner's.

Fash. Shall I meet you there? for I must needs talk with you.

Lord Fop. That I'm afraid mayn't be quite so praper; for those I commonly eat with are people of nice conversation; and you know, Tam, your education has been a little at large.—But there are other ordinaries in town—very good beef ordinaries —I suppose, Tam, you can eat beef?—However, dear Tam, I'm glad to see thee in England, stap my vitals!

[*Exit,* LA VAROLE *following.*

Fash. Hell and furies! is this to be borne?

Lory. Faith, sir, I could almost have given him a knock o' the pate myself.

Fash. 'Tis enough; I will now show you the excess of my passion, by being very calm.—Come, Lory, lay your loggerhead to mine, and, in cold blood, let us contrive his destruction.

Lory. Here comes a head, sir, would contrive it better than both our loggerheads, if she would but join in the confederacy.

Fash. By this light, Madam Coupler! she seems dissatisfied at something: let us observe her.

Enter MRS. COUPLER.

Mrs. Coup. So! I am likely to be well rewarded for my services, truly; my suspicions, I find, were but too just.—What! refuse to advance me a petty sum, when I am upon

the point of making him master of a galleon! But let him look to the consequences; an ungrateful, narrow-minded coxcomb!

Fash. So he is, upon my soul, old lady; it must be my brother you speak of.

Mrs. Coup. Ha! stripling, how came you here? What, hast spent all, eh? And art thou come to dun his lordship for assistance?

Fash. No, I want somebody's assistance to cut his lordship's throat, without the risk of being hanged for him.

Mrs. Coup. Egad, sirrah, I could help thee to do him almost as good a turn, without the danger of being burned in the hand for't.

Fash. How—how, old Mischief?

Mrs. Coup. Why, you must know I have done you the kindness to make up a match for your brother.

Fash. I am very much beholden to you, truly!

Mrs. Coup. You may before the wedding-day yet: the lady is a great heiress, the match is concluded, the writings are drawn, and his lordship is come hither to put the finishing hand to the business.

Fash. I understand as much.

Mrs. Coup. Now, you must know, stripling, your brother's a knave.

Fash. Good.

Mrs. Coup. He has given me a bond of a thousand pounds for helping him to this fortune, and has promised me as much more, in ready money, upon the day of the marriage; which, I understand by a friend, he never designs to pay me; and his just now refusing to pay me a part is a proof of it. If, therefore, you will be a generous young rogue, and secure me five thousand pounds, I'll help you to the lady.

Fash. And how the devil wilt thou do that?

Mrs. Coup. Without the devil's aid, I warrant thee. Thy brother's face not one of the family ever saw; the whole business has been managed by me, and all his letters go through my hands. Sir Tunbelly Clumsy, my relation—for that's the old gentleman's name—is apprised of his lordship's being down here, and expects him to-morrow to receive his daughter's hand; but the peer, I find, means to bait here a few days longer, to recover the fatigue of his journey, I suppose. Now you shall go to Muddymoat Hall in his place.—I'll give you a letter of introduction: and if you don't marry the girl before sunset, you deserve to be hanged before morning.

Fash Agreed! agreed! and for thy reward——

Mrs. Coup. Well, well;—though I warrant thou hast not a farthing of money in thy pocket now—no—one may see it in thy face.

Fash. Not a sous, by Jupiter!

Mrs. Coup. Must I advance, then? Well, be at my lodgings, next door, this evening, and I'll see what may be done—we'll sign and seal, and when I have given thee some further instructions, thou shalt hoist sail and begone. [*Exit.*

Fash. So, Lory, Fortune, thou seest, at last takes care of merit! we are in a fair way to be great people.

Lory. Ay, sir, if the devil don't step between the cup and the lip, as he used to do.

Fash. Why, faith, he has played me many a damned trick to spoil my fortune; and, egad, I am almost afraid he's at work about it again now; but if I should tell thee how, thou'dst wonder at me.

Lory. Indeed, sir, I should not.

Fash. How dost know?

Lory. Because, sir, I have wondered at you so often, I can wonder at you no more.

Fash. No! What wouldst thou say, if a qualm of conscience should spoil my design?

Lory. I would eat my words, and wonder more than ever.

Fash. Why faith, Lory, though I have played many a roguish trick, this is so full-grown a cheat, I find I must take pains to come up to't—I have scruples.

Lory. They are strong symptoms of death. If you find they increase, sir, pray make your will.

Fash. No, my conscience shan't starve me neither: but thus far I'll listen to it. Before I execute this project, I'll try my brother to the bottom. If he has yet so much humanity about him as to assist me—though with a moderate aid—I'll drop my project at his feet, and show him how I can do for him much more than what I'd ask he'd do for me. This one conclusive trial of him I resolve to make.—

Succeed or fail, still victory is my lot;
If I subdue his heart, 'tis well—if not,
I will subdue my conscience to my plot. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—LOVELESS'S *Lodgings.*

Enter LOVELESS *and* AMANDA.

Love How do you like these lodgings, my dear? For my part, I am so pleased with them, I shall hardly remove whilst we stay here, if you are satisfied.

Aman. I am satisfied with everything that pleases you, else I had not come to Scarborough at all.

Love. Oh, a little of the noise and folly of this place will sweeten the pleasures of our retreat; we shall find the charms of our retirement doubled when we return to it.

Aman. That pleasing prospect will be my chiefest entertainment, whilst, much against my will, I engage in those empty pleasures which 'tis so much the fashion to be fond of.

Love. I own most of them are, indeed, but empty; yet there are delights of which a private life is destitute, which may divert an honest man, and be a harmless entertainment to a virtuous woman: good music is one; and truly (with some small allowance) the plays, I think, may be esteemed another.

Aman. Plays, I must confess, have some small charms. What do you think of that you saw last night?

Love. To say truth, I did not mind it much—my attention was for some time taken off to admire the workmanship of nature, in the face of a young lady who sat some distance from me, she was so exquisitely handsome.

Aman. So exquisitely handsome!

Love. Why do you repeat my words, my dear?

Aman. Because you seemed to speak them with such pleasure, I thought I might oblige you with their echo.

Love. Then, you are alarmed, Amanda?

Aman. It is my duty to be so when you are in danger.

Love. You are too quick in apprehending for me. I viewed her with a world of admiration, but not one glance of love.

Aman. Take heed of trusting to such nice distinctions. But were your eyes the only things that were inquisitive? Had I been in your place, my tongue, I fancy, had been curious too. I should have asked her where she lived—yet still without design—who was she, pray?

Love. Indeed, I cannot tell.

Aman. You will not tell.

Love. Upon my honour, then, I did not ask.

Aman. Nor do you know what company was with her?

Love. I do not. But why are you so earnest?

Aman. I thought I had cause.

Love. But you thought wrong, Amanda; for turn the case, and let it be your story: should you come home and tell me you had seen a handsome man, should I grow jealous because you had eyes?

Aman. But should I tell you he was exquisitely so, and that I had gazed on him with admiration, should you not think

'twere possible I might go one step further, and inquire his name?

Love. [*Aside.*] She has reason on her side; I have talked too much; but I must turn off another way.—[*Aloud.*] Will you then make no difference, Amanda, between the language of our sex and yours? There is a modesty restrains your tongues, which makes you speak by halves when you commend; but roving flattery gives a loose to ours, which makes us still speak double what we think.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Madam, there is a lady at the door in a chair desires to know whether your ladyship sees company; her name is Berinthia.

Aman. Oh dear! 'tis a relation I have not seen these five years; pray her to walk in.—[*Exit* SERVANT.] Here's another beauty for you; she was, when I saw her last, reckoned extremely handsome.

Love. Don't be jealous now; for I shall gaze upon her too.

Enter BERINTHIA.

Ha! by heavens, the very woman! [*Aside.*

Ber. [*Salutes* AMANDA.] Dear Amanda, I did not expect to meet you in Scarborough.

Aman. Sweet cousin, I'm overjoyed to see you.—Mr. Loveless, here's a relation and a friend of mine, I desire you'll be better acquainted with.

Love. [*Salutes* BERINTHIA.] If my wife never desires a harder thing, madam, her request will be easily granted.

Re-enter SERVANT.

Ser. Sir, my Lord Foppington presents his humble service to you, and desires to know how you do. He's at the next door; and, if it be not inconvenient to you, he'll come and wait upon you.

Love. Give my compliments to his lordship, and I shall be glad to see him.—[*Exit* SERVANT.] If you are not acquainted with his lordship, madam, you will be entertained with his character.

Aman. Now it moves my pity more than my mirth to see a man whom nature has made no fool be so very industrious to pass for an ass.

Love. No, there you are wrong, Amanda; you should never bestow your pity upon those who take pains for your contempt: pity those whom nature abuses, never those who abuse nature.

Enter LORD FOPPINGTON.

Lord Fop. Dear Loveless, I am your most humble servant.

Love. My lord, I'm yours.

Lord Fop. Madam, your ladyship's very obedient slave.

Love. My lord, this lady is a relation of my wife's.

Lord Fop. [*Salutes* BERINTHIA.] The beautifulest race of people upon earth, rat me! Dear Loveless, I am overjoyed that you think of continuing here: I am, stap my vitals!—[*To* AMANDA.] For Gad's sake, madam, how has your ladyship been able to subsist thus long, under the fatigue of a country life?

Aman. My life has been very far from that, my lord; it has been a very quiet one.

Lord Fop. Why, that's the fatigue I speak of, madam; for 'tis impossible to be quiet without thinking: now thinking is to me the greatest fatigue in the world.

Aman. Does not your lordship love reading, then?

Lord Fop. Oh, passionately, madam; but I never think of what I read. For example, madam, my life is a perpetual stream of pleasure, that glides through with such a variety of entertainments, I believe the wisest of our ancestors never had the least conception of any of 'em. I rise, madam, when in tawn, about twelve o'clock. I don't rise sooner, because it is the worst thing in the world for the complexion: nat that I pretend to be a beau; but a man must endeavour to look decent, lest he makes so odious a figure in the side-bax, the ladies should be compelled to turn their eyes upon the play. So at twelve o'clock, I say, I rise. Naw, if I find it is a good day, I resalve to take the exercise of riding; so drink my chocolate, and draw on my boots by two. On my return, I dress; and, after dinner, lounge perhaps to the opera.

Ber. Your lordship, I suppose, is fond of music?

Lord Fop. Oh, passionately, on Tuesdays and Saturdays; for then there is always the best company, and one is not expected to undergo the fatigue of listening.

Aman. Does your lordship think that the case at the opera?

Lord Fop. Most certainly, madam. There is my Lady Tattle, my Lady Prate, my Lady Titter, my Lady Sneer, my Lady Giggle, and my Lady Grin—these have boxes in the front, and while any favourite air is singing, are the prettiest company in the waurld, stap my vitals!—Mayn't we hope for the honour to see you added to our society, madam?

Aman. Alas! my lord, I am the worst company in the world at a concert, I'm so apt to attend to the music.

Lord Fop. Why, madam, that is very pardonable in the country or at church, but a monstrous inattention in a polite assembly. But I am afraid I tire the company?

Love. Not at all. Pray go on.

Lord Fop. Why then, ladies, there only remains to add, that I generally conclude the evening at one or other of the clubs; nat that I ever play deep; indeed I have been for some time tied up from losing above five thousand paunds at a sitting.

Love. But isn't your lordship sometimes obliged to attend the weighty affairs of the nation?

Lord Fop. Sir, as to weighty affairs, I leave them to weighty heads; I never intend mine shall be a burden to my body.

Ber. Nay, my lord, but you are a pillar of the state.

Lord Fop. An ornamental pillar, madam; for sooner than undergo any part of the fatigue, rat me, but the whole building should fall plump to the ground!

Aman. But, my lord, a fine gentleman spends a great deal of his time in his intrigues; you have given us no account of them yet.

Lord Fop. [*Aside.*] So! she would inquire into my amours—that's jealousy, poor soul!—I see she's in love with me.—[*Aloud.*] O Lord, madam, I had like to have forgot a secret I must needs tell your ladyship.—Ned, you must not be so jealous now as to listen.

Love. [*Leading* BERINTHIA *up the stage.*] Not I, my lord; I am too fashionable a husband to pry into the secrets of my wife.

Lord Fop. [*Aside* to AMANDA, *squeezing her hand.*] I am in love with you to desperation, strike me speechless!

Aman. [*Strikes him on the ear.*] Then thus I return your passion.—An impudent fool!

Lord Fop. Gad's curse, madam, I am a peer of the realm!

Love. [*Hastily returning.*] Hey! what the devil, do you affront my wife, sir? Nay, then—— [*Draws. They fight.*

Aman. What has my folly done?—Help! murder! help! Part them, for Heaven's sake.

Lord Fop. [*Falls back and leans on his sword.*] Ah! quite through the body, stap my vitals!

Enter SERVANTS.

Love. [*Runs to* LORD FOPPINGTON.] I hope I han't killed the fool, however. Bear him up.—Call a surgeon there.

Lord Fop. Ay, pray make haste. [*Exit* SERVANT.

Love. This mischief you may thank yourself for.

Lord Fop. I may so; love's the devil indeed, Ned.

Re-enter SERVANT, *with* PROBE.

Ser. Here's Mr. Probe, sir, was just going by the door.

Lord Fop. He's the welcomest man alive.

Probe. Stand by, stand by, stand by; pray, gentlemen, stand r. Lord have mercy upon us, did you never see a man run rough the body before?—Pray stand by.

Lord Fop. Ah, Mr. Probe, I'm a dead man.

Probe. A dead man, and I by! I should laugh to see that, ad.

Love. Pr'ythee don't stand prating, but look upon his wound.

Probe. Why, what if I don't look upon his wound this hour, r?

Love. Why, then he'll bleed to death, sir.

Probe. Why, then I'll fetch him to life again, sir.

Love. 'Slife! he's run through the body, I tell thee.

Probe. I wish he was run through the heart, and I should get ie more credit by his cure. Now I hope you are satisfied? ome, now let me come at him—now let me come at him.—*Viewing his wound.*] Oons! what a gash is here! why, sir, a an may drive a coach and six horses into your body.

Lord Fop. Oh!

Probe. Why, what the devil have you run the gentleman rough with—a scythe?—[*Aside.*] A little scratch between the in and the ribs, that's all.

Love. Let me see his wound.

Probe. Then you shall dress it, sir; for if anybody looks pon it I won't.

Love. Why thou art the veriest coxcomb I ever saw!

Probe. Sir, I am not master of my trade for nothing.

Lord Fop. Surgeon!

Probe. Sir.

Lord Fop. Are there any hopes?

Probe. Hopes! I can't tell. What are you willing to give or a cure?

Lord Fop. Five hundred paunds with pleasure.

Probe. Why then perhaps there may be hopes; but we must void further delay.—Here, help the gentleman into a chair, nd carry him to my house presently—that's the properest lace—[*Aside.*] to bubble him out of his money.—[*Aloud.*] ome, a chair—a chair quickly—there, in with him.

[SERVANTS *put* LORD FOPPINGTON *into a chair.*

Lord Fop. Dear Loveless, adieu; if I die, I forgive thee; nd if I live. I hope thou wilt do as much by me. I am sorry

you and I should quarrel, but I hope here's an end on't; for, if you are satisfied, I am.

Love. I shall hardly think it worth my prosecuting any further, so you may be at rest, sir.

Lord Fop. Thou art a generous fellow, strike me dumb!—[*Aside.*] But thou hast an impertinent wife, stap my vitals!

Probe. So—carry him off, carry him off!—We shall have him prate himself into a fever by-and-by.—Carry him off!

[*Exit with* LORD FOPPINGTON.

Enter COLONEL TOWNLY.

Col. Town. So, so, I am glad to find you all alive—I met a wounded peer carrying off. For heaven's sake what was the matter?

Love. Oh, a trifle! he would have made love to my wife before my face, so she obliged him with a box o' the ear, and I run him through the body, that was all.

Col. Town. Bagatelle on all sides. But pray, madam, how long has this noble lord been an humble servant of yours?

Aman. This is the first I have heard on't—so, I suppose, 'tis his quality more than his love has brought him into this adventure. He thinks his title an authentic passport to every woman's heart below the degree of a peeress.

Col. Town. He's coxcomb enough to think anything; but I would not have you brought into trouble for him. I hope there's no danger of his life?

Love. None at all. He's fallen into the hands of a roguish surgeon, who, I perceive, designs to frighten a little money out of him: but I saw his wound—'tis nothing: he may go to the ball to-night if he pleases.

Col. Town. I am glad you have corrected him without further mischief, or you might have deprived me of the pleasure of executing a plot against his lordship, which I have been contriving with an old acquaintance of yours.

Love. Explain.

Col. Town. His brother, Tom Fashion, is come down here, and we have it in contemplation to save him the trouble of his intended wedding; but we want your assistance. Tom would have called, but he is preparing for his enterprise, so I promised to bring you to him—so, sir, if these ladies can spare you——

Love. I'll go with you with all my heart.—[*Aside.*] Though I could wish, methinks, to stay and gaze a little longer on that creature. Good gods! how engaging she is!—but what have I to do with beauty? I have already had my portion, and must not covet more.

Aman. Mr. Loveless, pray one word with you before you go.
[*Exit* COLONEL TOWNLY.

Love. What would my dear?

Aman. Only a woman's foolish question: how do you like my cousin here?

Love. Jealous already, Amanda?

Aman. Not at all: I ask you for another reason.

Love. [*Aside.*] Whate'er her reason be, I must not tell her true.—[*Aloud.*] Why, I confess, she's handsome: but you must not think I slight your kinswoman, if I own to you, of all the women who may claim that character, she is the last that would triumph in my heart.

Aman. I'm satisfied.

Love. Now tell me why you asked?

Aman. At night I will—adieu!

Love. I'm yours. [*Kisses her, and exit.*

Aman. I'm glad to find he does not like her, for I have a great mind to persuade her to come and live with me. [*Aside.*

Ber. So! I find my colonel continues in his airs: there must be something more at the bottom of this than the provocation he pretends from me. [*Aside.*

Aman. For Heaven's sake, Berinthia, tell me what way I shall take to persuade you to come and live with me.

Ber. Why, one way in the world there is, and but one.

Aman. And pray what is that?

Ber. It is to assure me—I shall be very welcome.

Aman. If that be all, you shall e'en sleep here to-night.

Ber. To-night!

Aman. Yes, to-night.

Ber. Why, the people where I lodge will think me mad.

Aman. Let 'em think what they please.

Ber. Say you so, Amanda? Why, then, they shall think what they please: for I'm a young widow, and I care not what anybody thinks.—Ah, Amanda, it's a delicious thing to be a young widow!

Aman. You'll hardly make me think so.

Ber. Poh! because you are in love with your husband.

Aman. Pray, 'tis with a world of innocence I would inquire whether you think those we call women of reputation do really escape all other men as they do those shadows of beaux?

Ber. Oh no, Amanda; there are a sort of men make dreadful work amongst 'em, men that may be called the beau's antipathy, for they agree in nothing but walking upon two legs. These have brains, the beau has none. These are in love

with their mistress, the beau with himself. They take care of their reputation, the beau is industrious to destroy it. They are decent, he's a fop; in short, they are men, he's an ass.

Aman. If this be their character, I fancy we had here, e'en now, a pattern of 'em both.

Ber. His lordship and Colonel Townly?

Aman. The same.

Ber. As for the lord, he is eminently so; and for the other, I can assure you there's not a man in town who has a better interest with the women, that are worth having an interest with.

Aman. He answers the opinion I had ever of him.—[*Takes her hand.*] I must acquaint you with a secret—'tis not that fool alone has talked to me of love; Townly has been tampering too.

Ber. [*Aside.*] So, so! here the mystery comes out!—[*Aloud.*] Colonel Townly! impossible, my dear!

Aman. 'Tis true indeed; though he has done it in vain; nor do I think that all the merit of mankind combined could shake the tender love I bear my husband; yet I will own to you, Berinthia, I did not start at his addresses, as when they came from one whom I contemned.

Ber. [*Aside.*] Oh, this is better and better!—[*Aloud.*] Well said, Innocence! and you really think, my dear, that nothing could abate your constancy and attachment to your husband?

Aman. Nothing, I am convinced.

Ber. What, if you found he loved another woman better?

Aman. Well!

Ber. Well!—why, were I that thing they call a slighted wife, somebody should run the risk of being that thing they call—a husband. Don't I talk madly?

Aman. Madly indeed!

Ber. Yet I'm very innocent.

Aman. That I dare swear you are. I know how to make allowances for your humour: but you resolve then never to marry again?

Ber. Oh no! I resolve I will.

Aman. How so?

Ber. That I never may.

Aman. You banter me.

Ber. Indeed I don't: but I consider I'm a woman, and form my resolutions accordingly.

Aman. Well, my opinion is, form what resolutions you will, matrimony will be the end on't.

Ber. I doubt it—but a——Heavens! I have business at home, and am half an hour too late.

Aman. As you are to return with me, I'll just give some orders, and walk with you.

Ber. Well, make haste, and we'll finish this subject as we go. —[*Exit* AMANDA.] Ah, poor Amanda! you have led a country life. Well, this discovery is lucky! Base Townly! at once false to me and treacherous to his friend!—And my innocent and demure cousin too! I have it in my power to be revenged on her, however. Her husband, if I have any skill in countenance, would be as happy in my smiles as Townly can hope to be in hers. I'll make the experiment, come what will on't. The woman who can forgive the being robbed of a favoured lover, must be either an idiot or something worse. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—LORD FOPPINGTON'S *Lodgings.*

Enter LORD FOPPINGTON *and* LA VAROLE.

Lord Fop. Hey, fellow, let my vis-à-vis come to the door.

La Var. Will your lordship venture so soon to expose yourself to the weather?

Lord Fop. Sir, I will venture as soon as I can to expose myself to the ladies.

La Var. I wish your lordship would please to keep house a little longer; I'm afraid your honour does not well consider your wound.

Lord Fop. My wound!—I would not be in eclipse another day, though I had as many wounds in my body as I have had in my heart. So mind, Varole, let these cards be left as directed; for this evening I shall wait on my future father-in-law, Sir Tunbelly, and I mean to commence my devoirs to the lady, by giving an entertainment at her father's expense; and hark thee, tell Mr. Loveless I request he and his company will honour me with their presence, or I shall think we are not friends.

La Var. I will be sure, milor. [*Exit.*

Enter TOM FASHION.

Fash. Brother, your servant; how do you find yourself today?

Lord Fop. So well that I have ardered my coach to the door —so there's no danger of death this baut, Tam.

Fash. I'm very glad of it.

Lord Fop. [*Aside.*] That I believe's a lie.—[*Aloud.*] Pr'ythee, Tam, tell me one thing,—did not your heart cut a caper up to your mauth, when you heard I was run through the bady?

Fash. Why do you think it should?

Lord Fop. Because I remember mine did so, when I heard my uncle was shot through the head.

Fash. It then did very ill.

Lord Fop. Pr'ythee, why so?

Fash. Because he used you very well.

Lord Fop. Well!—Naw, strike me dumb! he starved me; he has let me want a thausand women for want of a thausand paund.

Fash. Then he hindered you from making a great many ill bargains; for I think no woman worth money that will take money.

Lord Fop. If I was a younger brother I should think so too.

Fash. Then you are seldom much in love?

Lord Fop. Never, stap my vitals!

Fash. Why, then, did you make all this bustle about Amanda?

Lord Fop. Because she's a woman of insolent virtue, and I thought myself piqued, in honour, to debauch her.

Fash. Very well.—[*Aside.*] Here's a rare fellow for you, to have the spending of ten thousand pounds a year! But now for my business with him.—[*Aloud.*] Brother, though I know to talk of any business (especially of money) is a theme not quite so entertaining to you as that of the ladies, my necessities are such, I hope you'll have patience to hear me.

Lord Fop. The greatness of your necessities, Tam, is the worst argument in the waurld for your being patiently heard. I do believe you are going to make a very good speech, but, strike me dumb! it has the worst beginning of any speech I have heard this twelvemonth.

Fash. I'm sorry you think so.

Lord Fop. I do believe thou art: but come, let's know the affair quickly.

Fash. Why then, my case in a word is this: the necessary expenses of my travels have so much exceeded the wretched income of my annuity, that I have been forced to mortgage it for five hundred pounds, which is spent. So, unless you are so kind as to assist me in redeeming it, I know no remedy but to take a purse.

Lord Fop. Why faith, Tam, to give you my sense of the thing, I do think taking a purse the best remedy in the waurld; for if you succeed, you are relieved that way, if you are

taken, [*Drawing his hand round his neck,*] you are relieved t'other.

Fash. I'm glad to see you are in so pleasant a humour; I hope I shall find the effects on't.

Lord Fop. Why, do you then really think it a reasonable thing, that I should give you five hundred paunds?

Fash. I do not ask it as a due, brother; I am willing to receive it as a favour.

Lord Fop. Then thou art willing to receive it anyhow, strike me speechless! But these are damned times to give money in; taxes are so great, repairs so exorbitant, tenants such rogues, and bouquets so dear, that, the devil take me, I am reduced to that extremity in my cash, I have been forced to retrench in that one article of sweet pawder, till I have brought it down to five guineas a maunth—now judge, Tam, whether I can spare you five hundred paunds.

Fash. If you can't, I must starve, that's all.—[*Aside.*] Damn him!

Lord Fop. All I can say is, you should have been a better husband.

Fash. Ouns! if you can't live upon ten thousand a year, how do you think I should do't upon two hundred?

Lord Fop. Don't be in a passion, Tam, for passion is the most unbecoming thing in the waurld—to the face. Look you, I don't love to say anything to you to make you melancholy, but upon this occasion I must take leave to put you in mind that a running horse does require more attendance than a coach-horse. Nature has made some difference 'twixt you and me.

Fash. Yes—she has made you older.—[*Aside.*] Plague take her!

Lord Fop. That is not all, Tam.

Fash. Why, what is there else?

Lord Fop. [*Looks first on himself, and then on his brother.*] Ask the ladies.

Fash. Why, thou essence-bottle, thou musk-cat! dost thou then think thou hast any advantage over me but what Fortune has given thee?

Lord Fop. I do, stap my vitals!

Fash. Now, by all that's great and powerful, thou art the prince of coxcombs!

Lord Fop. Sir, I am proud at being at the head of so prevailing a party.

Fash. Will nothing provoke thee?—Draw, coward!

Lord Fop. Look you, Tam, you know I have always taken you for a mighty dull fellow, and here is one of the foolishest plats broke out that I have seen a lang time. Your poverty makes life so burdensome to you, you would provoke me to a quarrel, in hopes either to slip through my lungs into my estate, or to get yourself run through the guts, to put an end to your pain. But I will disappoint you in both your designs; far, with the temper of a philasapher, and the discretion of a statesman —I shall leave the room with my sword in the scabbard. [*Exit.*

Fash. So! farewell, brother; and now, conscience, I defy thee. Lory!

Enter LORY.

Lory. Sir!

Fash. Here's rare news, Lory; his lordship has given me a pill has purged off all my scruples.

Lory. Then my heart's at ease again: for I have been in a lamentable fright, sir, ever since your conscience had the impudence to intrude into your company.

Fash. Be at peace; it will come there no more: my brother has given it a wring by the nose, and I have kicked it downstairs. So run away to the inn, get the chaise ready quickly, and bring it to Dame Coupler's without a moment's delay.

Lory. Then, sir, you are going straight about the fortune?

Fash. I am,—Away—fly, Lory!

Lory. The happiest day I ever saw. I'm upon the wing already. Now then I shall get my wages. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Garden behind* LOVELESS'S *Lodgings.*

Enter LOVELESS *and* SERVANT.

Love. Is my wife within?

Ser. No, sir, she has gone out this half-hour.

Love. Well, leave me.—[*Exit* SERVANT.] How strangely does my mind run on this widow!—Never was my heart so suddenly seized on before. That my wife should pick out her, of all womankind, to be her playfellow! But what fate does, let fate answer for: I sought it not. So! by Heavens! here she comes.

Enter BERINTHIA.

Ber. What makes you look so thoughful, sir? I hope you are not ill.

Love. I was debating, madam, whether I was so or not, and that was it which made me look so thoughtful.

Ber. Is it then so hard a matter to decide? I thought all

people were acquainted with their own bodies, though few people know their own minds.

Love. What if the distemper I suspect be in the mind?

Ber. Why then I'll undertake to prescribe you a cure.

Love. Alas! you undertake you know not what.

Ber. So far at least, then, you allow me to be a physician.

Love. Nay, I'll allow you to be so yet further; for I have reason to believe, should I put myself into your hands, you would increase my distemper.

Ber. How!

Love. Oh, you might betray me to my wife.

Ber. And so lose all my practice.

Love. Will you then keep my secret?

Ber. I will.

Love. Well—but swear it.

Ber. I swear by woman.

Love. Nay, that's swearing by my deity; swear by your own, and I shall believe you.

Ber. Well then, I swear by man!

Love. I'm satisfied. Now hear my symptoms, and give me your advice. The first were these; when I saw you at the play, a random glance you threw at first alarmed me. I could not turn my eyes from whence the danger came—I gazed upon you till my heart began to pant—nay, even now, on your approaching me, my illness is so increased that if you do not help me I shall, whilst you look on, consume to ashes.

[*Takes her hand.*

Ber. O Lord, let me go! 'tis the plague, and we shall be infected. [*Breaking from him.*

Love. Then we'll die together, my charming angel.

Ber. O Gad! the devil's in you! Lord, let me go!—here's somebody coming.

Re-enter SERVANT.

Ser. Sir, my lady's come home, and desires to speak with you.

Love. Tell her I'm coming.—[*Exit* SERVANT.] But before I go, one glass of nectar to drink her health. [*To* BERINTHIA.

Ber. Stand off, or I shall hate you, by Heavens!

Love. [*Kissing her.*] In matters of love, a woman's oath is no more to be minded than a man's. [*Exit.*

Ber. Um!

Enter COLONEL TOWNLY.

Col. Town. [*Aside.*] So! what's here—Berinthia and Loveless—and in such close conversation!—I cannot now wonder

at her indifference in excusing herself to me!—O rare woman! —Well then, let Loveless look to his wife, 'twill be but the retort courteous on both sides.—[*Aloud.*] Your servant, madam; I need not ask you how you do, you have got so good a colour.

Ber. No better than I used to have, I suppose.

Col. Town. A little more blood in your cheeks.

Ber. I have been walking!

Col. Town. Is that all? Pray was it Mr. Loveless went from here just now?

Ber. O yes—he has been walking with me.

Col. Town. He has!

Ber. Upon my word I think he is a very agreeable man; and there is certainly something particularly insinuating in his address!

Col. Town. [*Aside.*] So, so! she hasn't even the modesty to dissemble! [*Aloud.*] Pray, madam, may I, without impertinence, trouble you with a few serious questions?

Ber. As many as you please; but pray let them be as little serious as possible.

Col. Town. Is it not near two years since I have presumed to address you?

Ber. I don't know exactly—but it has been a tedious long time.

Col. Town. Have I not, during that period, had every reason to believe that my assiduities were far from being unacceptable?

Ber. Why, to do you justice, you have been extremely troublesome—and I confess I have been more civil to you than you deserved.

Col. Town. Did I not come to this place at your express desire, and for no purpose but the honour of meeting you?—and after waiting a month in disappointment, have you condescended to explain, or in the slightest way apologise for, your conduct?

Ber. O heavens! apologise for my conduct!—apologise to you! O you barbarian! But pray now, my good serious colonel, have you anything more to add?

Col. Town. Nothing, madam, but that after such behaviour I am less surprised at what I saw just now; it is not very wonderful that the woman who can trifle with the delicate addresses of an honourable lover should be found coquetting with the husband of her friend.

Ber. Very true: no more wonderful than it was for this honourable lover to divert himself in the absence of this

coquette, with endeavouring to seduce his friend's wife! O colonel, colonel, don't talk of honour or your friend, for Heaven's sake!

Col. Town. [*Aside.*] 'Sdeath! how came she to suspect this!—[*Aloud.*] Really, madam, I don't understand you.

Ber. Nay, nay, you saw I did not pretend to misunderstand you.—But here comes the lady: perhaps you would be glad to be left with her for an explanation.

Col. Town. O madam, this recrimination is a poor resource; and to convince you how much you are mistaken, I beg leave to decline the happiness you propose me.—Madam, your servant.

Enter AMANDA. COLONEL TOWNLY *whispers* AMANDA, *and exit.*

Ber. [*Aside.*] He carries it off well, however; upon my word, very well! How tenderly they part!—[*Aloud.*] So, cousin; I hope you have not been chiding your admirer for being with me? I assure you we have been talking of you.

Aman. Fy, Berinthia!—my admirer! will you never learn to talk in earnest of anything?

Ber. Why this shall be in earnest, if you please; for my part, I only tell you matter of fact.

Aman. I'm sure there's so much jest and earnest in what you say to me on this subject, I scarce know how to take it. I have just parted with Mr. Loveless; perhaps it is fancy, but I think there is an alteration in his manner which alarms me.

Ber. And so you are jealous; is that all?

Aman. That all! is jealousy, then, nothing?

Ber. It should be nothing, if I were in your case.

Aman. Why, what would you do?

Ber. I'd cure myself.

Aman. How?

Ber. Care as little for my husband as he did for me. Look you, Amanda, you may build castles in the air, and fume, and fret, and grow thin, and lean, and pale, and ugly, if you please; but I tell you, no man worth having is true to his wife, or ever was, or ever will be so.

Aman. Do you then really think he's false to me? for I did not suspect him.

Ber. Think so? I am sure of it.

Aman. You are sure on't?

Ber. Positively—he fell in love at the play.

Aman. Right—the very same! But who could have told you this?

Ber. Um!—Oh, Townly! I suppose your husband has made him his confidant.

Aman. O base Loveless! And what did Townly say on't?

Ber. [*Aside.*] So, so! why should she ask that?—[*Aloud.*] Say! why, he abused Loveless extremely, and said all the tender things of you in the world.

Aman. Did he?—Oh! my heart!—I'm very ill—dear Berinthia, don't leave me a moment. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Outside of* SIR TUNBELLY CLUMSY'S *House.*

Enter TOM FASHION *and* LORY.

Fash. So, here's our inheritance, Lory, if we can but get into possession. But methinks the seat of our family looks like Noah's ark, as if the chief part on't were designed for the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field.

Lory. Pray, sir, don't let your head run upon the orders of building here: get but the heiress, let the devil take the house.

Fash. Get but the house, let the devil take the heiress! I say.—But come, we have no time to squander; knock at the door.—[LORY *knocks two or three times at the gate.*] What the devil! have they got no ears in this house?—Knock harder.

Lory. Egad, sir, this will prove some enchanted castle; we shall have the giant come out by-and-by, with his club, and beat our brains out. [*Knocks again.*

Fash. Hush, they come.

Ser. [*Within.*] Who is there?

Lory. Open the door and see: is that your country breeding?

Ser. Ay, but two words to that bargain.—Timmas, is the blunderbuss primed?

Fash. Ouns! give 'em good words, Lory,—or we shall be shot here a fortune catching.

Lory. Egad, sir, I think you're in the right on't.—Ho! Mr. What-d'ye-call-'um, will you please to let us in? or are we to be left to grow like willows by your moat side?

SERVANT *appears at the window with a blunderbuss.*

Ser. Well naw, what's ya're business?

Fash. Nothing, sir, but to wait upon Sir Tunbelly, with your eave.

Ser. To weat upon Sir Tunbelly! why, you'll find that's just as Sir Tunbelly pleases.

Fash. But will you do me the favour, sir, to know whether Sir Tunbelly pleases or not?

Ser. Why, look you, d'ye see, with good words much may

be done. Ralph, go thy ways, and ask Sir Tunbelly if he pleases to be waited upon—and dost hear, call to nurse, that she may lock up Miss Hoyden before the gates open.

Fash. D'ye hear that, Lory?

Enter SIR TUNBELLY CLUMSY, *with* SERVANTS, *armed with guns, clubs, pitchforks, &c.*

Lory. Oh! [*Runs behind his master.*] O Lord! O Lord! Lord! we are both dead men!

Fash. Fool! thy fear will ruin us. [*Aside to* LORY.

Lory. My fear, sir? 'sdeath, sir, I fear nothing.—[*Aside.*] Would I were well up to the chin in a horsepond!

Sir Tun. Who is it here hath any business with me?

Fash. Sir, 'tis I, if your name be Sir Tunbelly Clumsy.

Sir Tun. Sir, my name is Sir Tunbelly Clumsy, whether you have any business with me or not.—So you see I am not ashamed of my name, nor my face either.

Fash. Sir, you have no cause that I know of.

Sir Tun. Sir, if you have no cause either, I desire to know who you are; for, till I know your name, I shan't ask you to come into my house: and when I do know your name, 'tis six to four I don't ask you then.

Fash. Sir, I hope you'll find this letter an authentic passport. [*Gives him a letter.*

Sir Tun. Cod's my life, from Mrs: Coupler!—I ask your lordship's pardon ten thousand times.—[*To a* SERVANT.] Here, run in a-doors quickly; get a Scotch coal fire in the parlour, set all the Turkey work chairs in their places, get the brass candlesticks out, and be sure stick the socket full of laurel—run!—[*Turns to* TOM FASHION.] My lord, I ask your lordship's pardon.—[*To* SERVANT.] And, do you hear, run away to nurse; bid her let Miss Hoyden loose again.—[*Exit* SERVANT.] I hope your honour will excuse the disorder of my family. We are not used to receive men of your lordship's great quality every day. Pray, where are your coaches and servants, my lord?

Fash. Sir, that I might give you and your daughter a proof how impatient I am to be nearer akin to you, I left my equipage to follow me, and came away post with only one servant.

Sir Tun. Your lordship does me too much honour—it was exposing your person to too much fatigue and danger, I protest it was; but my daughter shall endeavour to make you what amends she can; and, though I say it that should not say it, Hoyden has charms.

Fash. Sir, I am not a stranger to them, though I am to her; common fame has done her justice.

Sir Tun. My lord, I am common fame's very grateful, humble servant. My lord, my girl's young—Hoyden is young, my lord: but this I must say for her, what she wants in art she has in breeding; and what's wanting in her age, is made good in her constitution.—So pray, my lord, walk in; pray, my lord, walk in.

Fash. Sir, I wait upon you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*A Room in* SIR TUNBELLY CLUMSY'S *House.*

MISS HOYDEN *discovered alone.*

Miss Hoyd. Sure, nobody was ever used as I am! I know well enough what other girls do, for all they think to make a fool o' me. It's well I have a husband a-coming, or ecod I'd marry the baker, I would so. Nobody can knock at the gate, but presently I must be locked up; and here's the young greyhound can run loose about the house all the day long, so she can.—'Tis very well!

Nurse. [*Without, opening the door.*] Miss Hoyden! miss, miss, miss! Miss Hoyden!

Enter NURSE.

Miss Hoyd. Well, what do you make such a noise for, eh? What do you din a body's ears for? Can't one be at quiet for you?

Nurse. What do I din your ears for? Here's one come will din your ears for you.

Miss Hoyd. What care I who's come? I care not a fig who comes, or who goes, so long as I must be locked up like the ale-cellar.

Nurse. That, miss, is for fear you should be drank before you are ripe.

Miss Hoyd. Oh, don't trouble your head about that; I'm as ripe as you, though not so mellow.

Nurse. Very well! Now I have a good mind to lock you up again, and not let you see my lord to-night.

Miss Hoyd. My lord: why, is my husband come?

Nurse. Yes, marry, is he; and a goodly person too.

Miss Hoyd. [*Hugs* NURSE.] Oh, my dear nurse, forgive me this once, and I'll never misuse you again; no, if I do, you shall give me three thumps on the back, and a great pinch by the cheek.

Nurse. Ah, the poor thing! see now it melts; it's as full of good-nature as an egg's full of meat.

Miss Hoyd. But, my dear nurse, don't lie now—is he come, by your troth?

Nurse. Yes, by my truly, is he.

Miss Hoyd. O Lord! I'll go and put on my laced tucker, though I'm locked up for a month for 't.

[*Exeunt.* MISS HOYDEN *goes off capering, and twirling her doll by its leg.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Room in* SIR TUNBELLY CLUMSY'S *House.*

Enter MISS HOYDEN *and* NURSE.

Nurse. Well, miss, how do you like your husband that is to be?

Miss Hoyd. O Lord, nurse, I'm so overjoyed I can scarce contain myself!

Nurse. Oh, but you must have a care of being too fond; for men, nowadays, hate a woman that loves 'em.

Miss Hoyd. Love him! why, do you think I love him, nurse? Ecod, I would not care if he was hanged, so I were but once married to him. No, that which pleases me is to think what work I'll make when I get to London; for when I am a wife and a lady both, ecod, I'll flaunt it with the best of 'em. Ay, and I shall have money enough to do so too, nurse.

Nurse. Ah, there's no knowing that, miss; for though these lords have a power of wealth indeed, yet, as I have heard say, they give it all to their sluts and their trulls, who joggle it about in their coaches, with a murrain to 'em, whilst poor madam sits sighing and wishing, and has not a spare half-crown to buy her a Practice of Piety.

Miss Hoyd. Oh, but for that, don't deceive yourself, nurse; for this I must say of my lord, he's as free as an open house at Christmas; for this very morning he told me I should have six hundred a year to buy pins. Now if he gives me six hundred a year to buy pins, what do you think he'll give me to buy petticoats?

Nurse. Ay, my dearest, he deceives thee foully, and he's no better than a rogue for his pains! These Londoners have got a gibberish with 'em would confound a gipsy. That which they call pin-money, is to buy everything in the 'versal world, down to their very shoe-knots. Nay, I have heard some folks say that some ladies, if they'll have gallants as they call 'em, are forced to find them out of their pin-money too.—But look, look, if his honour be not coming to you!—Now, if I were sure you

would behave yourself handsomely, and not disgrace me that have brought you up, I'd leave you alone together.

Miss Hoyd. That's my best nurse; do as you'd be done by. Trust us together this once, and if I don't show my breeding, I wish I may never be married, but die an old maid.

Nurse. Well, this once I'll venture you. But if you disparage me——

Miss Hoyd. Never fear. [*Exit* NURSE.

Enter TOM FASHION.

Fash. Your servant, madam; I'm glad to find you alone, for I have something of importance to speak to you about.

Miss Hoyd. Sir (my lord, I meant), you may speak to me about what you please, I shall give you a civil answer.

Fash. You give so obliging an one, it encourages me to tell you in a few words what I think, both for your interest and mine. Your father, I suppose you know, has resolved to make me happy in being your husband; and I hope I may obtain your consent to perform what he desires.

Miss Hoyd. Sir, I never disobey my father in anything but eating green gooseberries.

Fash. So good a daughter must needs be an admirable wife. I am therefore impatient till you are mine, and hope you will so far consider the violence of my love, that you won't have the cruelty to defer my happiness so long as your father designs it.

Miss Hoyd. Pray, my lord, how long is that?

Fash. Madam, a thousand years—a whole week.

Miss Hoyd. Why I thought it was to be to-morrow morning, as soon as I was up. I'm sure nurse told me so.

Fash. And it shall be to-morrow morning, if you'll consent.

Miss Hoyd. If I'll consent! Why I thought I was to obey you as my husband?

Fash. That's when we are married. Till then, I'm to obey you.

Miss Hoyd. Why then, if we are to take it by turns, it's the same thing. I'll obey you now, and when we are married, you shall obey me.

Fash. With all my heart. But I doubt we must get nurse on our side, or we shall hardly prevail with the chaplain.

Miss Hoyd. No more we shan't, indeed; for he loves her better than he loves his pulpit, and would always be a-preaching to her by his good will.

Fash. Why then, my dear, if you'll call her hither, we'll persuade her presently.

Miss Hoyd. O Lud! I'll tell you a way how to persuade her to anything.

Fash. How's that?

Miss Hoyd. Why tell her she's a handsome comely woman, and give her half-a-crown.

Fash. Nay, if that will do, she shall have half a score of 'em.

Miss Hoyd. O gemini! for half that she'd marry you herself. —I'll run and call her. [*Exit.*

Fash. So! matters go on swimmingly. This is a rare girl, i'faith. I shall have a fine time on't with her at London.

Enter LORY.

So, Lory, what's the matter?

Lory. Here, sir—an intercepted packet from the enemy; your brother's postilion brought it. I knew the livery, pretended to be a servant of Sir Tunbelly's, and so got possession of the letter.

Fash. [*Looks at the letter.*] Ouns! he tells Sir Tunbelly here that he will be with him this evening, with a large party to supper.—Egad, I must marry the girl directly.

Lory. Oh, zounds, sir, directly to be sure. Here she comes. [*Exit.*

Fash. And the old Jezebel with her.

Re-enter MISS HOYDEN *and* NURSE.

How do you do, good Mrs. Nurse? I desired your young lady would give me leave to see you, that I might thank you for your extraordinary care and kind conduct in her education: pray accept of this small acknowledgment for it at present, and depend upon my further kindness when I shall be that happy thing her husband. [*Gives her money.*

Nurse. [*Aside.*] Gold, by the maakins!—[*Aloud.*] Your honour's goodness is too great. Alas! all I can boast of is, I gave her pure good milk, and so your honour would have said, an you had seen how the poor thing thrived, and how it would look up in my face, and crow and laugh, it would.

Miss Hoyd. [*To* NURSE, *taking her angrily aside.*] Pray, one word with you. Pr'ythee, nurse, don't stand ripping up old stories, to make one ashamed before one's love. Do you think such a fine proper gentleman as he is cares for a fiddlecome tale of a child? If you have a mind to make him have a good opinion of a woman, don't tell him what one did then, tell him what one can do now.—[*To* TOM FASHION.] I hope your honour will excuse my mis-manners to whisper before you; it was only to give some orders about the family.

Fash. Oh, everything, madam, is to give way to business; besides, good housewifery is a very commendable quality in a young lady.

Miss Hoyd. Pray, sir, are young ladies good housewives at London-town? Do they darn their own linen?

Fash. Oh no, they study how to spend money, not to save.

Miss Hoyd. Ecod, I don't know but that may be better sport, eh, nurse?

Fash. Well, you shall have your choice, when you come there.

Miss Hoyd. Shall I? then, by my troth, I'll get there as fast as I can.—[*To* NURSE.] His honour desires you'll be so kind as to let us be married to-morrow.

Nurse. To-morrow, my dear madam?

Fash. Ay, faith, nurse, you may well be surprised at miss's wanting to put it off so long. To-morrow! no, no; 'tis now, this very hour, I would have the ceremony performed.

Miss Hoyd. Ecod, with all my heart.

Nurse. O mercy! worse and worse!

Fash. Yes, sweet nurse, now and privately; for all things being signed and sealed, why should Sir Tunbelly make us stay a week for a wedding-dinner?

Nurse. But if you should be married now, what will you do when Sir Tunbelly calls for you to be married?

Miss Hoyd. Why then we will be married again.

Nurse. What twice, my child?

Miss Hoyd. Ecod, I don't care how often I'm married, not I.

Nurse. Well, I'm such a tender-hearted fool, I find I can refuse you nothing. So you shall e'en follow your own inventions.

Miss Hoyd. Shall I? O Lord, I could leap over the moon!

Fash. Dear nurse, this goodness of yours shall be still more rewarded. But now you must employ your power with the chaplain, that he may do his friendly office too, and then we shall be all happy. Do you think you can prevail with him?

Nurse. Prevail with him! or he shall never prevail with me, I can tell him that.

Fash. I'm glad to hear it; however, to strengthen your interest with him, you may let him know I have several fat livings in my gift, and that the first that falls shall be in your disposal.

Nurse. Nay, then, I'll make him marry more folks than one, I'll promise him!

Miss Hoyd. Faith, do, nurse, make him marry you too; I'm sure he'll do't for a fat living.

Fash. Well, nurse, while you go and settle matters with him, your lady and I will go and take a walk in the garden.—[*Exit*

NURSE.] Come, madam, dare you venture yourself alone with me? [*Takes* MISS HOYDEN *by the hand.*

Miss Hoyd. Oh dear, yes, sir; I don't think you'll do any think to me I need be afraid on. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—AMANDA'S *Dressing-room.*

Enter AMANDA, *followed by her* MAID.

Maid. If you please, madam, only to say whether you'll have me buy them or not?

Aman. Yes—no—Go, teaser; I care not what you do. Pr'ythee leave me. [*Exit* MAID.

Enter BERINTHIA.

Ber. What, in the name of Jove, is the matter with you?

Aman. The matter, Berinthia! I'm almost mad; I'm plagued to death.

Ber. Who is it that plagues you?

Aman. Who do you think should plague a wife but her husband?

Ber. O, ho! is it come to that?—We shall have you wish yourself a widow, by-and-by.

Aman. Would I were anything but what I am! A base, ungrateful man, to use me thus!

Ber. What, has he given you fresh reason to suspect his wandering?

Aman. Every hour gives me reason.

Ber. And yet, Amanda, you perhaps at this moment cause in another's breast the same tormenting doubts and jealousies which you feel so sensibly yourself.

Aman. Heaven knows I would not.

Ber. Why, you can't tell but there may be some one as tenderly attached to Townly, whom you boast of as your conquest, as you can be to your husband?

Aman. I'm sure I never encouraged his pretensions.

Ber. Psha! psha! no sensible man ever perseveres to love without encouragement. Why have you not treated him as you have Lord Foppington?

Aman. Because he presumed not so far. But let us drop the subject. Men, not women, are riddles. Mr. Loveless now follows some flirt for variety, whom I'm sure he does not like so well as he does me.

Ber. That's more than you know, madam.

Aman. Why, do you know the ugly thing?

Ber. I think I can guess at the person; but she's no such ugly thing neither.

Aman. Is she very handsome?

Ber. Truly I think so.

Aman. Whate'er she be, I'm sure he does not like her well enough to bestow anything more than a little outward gallantry upon her.

Ber. [*Aside.*] Outward gallantry! I can't bear this.—[*Aloud.*] Come, come, don't you be too secure, Amanda: while you suffer Townly to imagine that you do not detest him for his designs on you, you have no right to complain that your husband is engaged elsewhere. But here comes the person we were speaking of.

Enter COLONEL TOWNLY.

Col. Town. Ladies, as I come uninvited, I beg, if I intrude, you will use the same freedom in turning me out again.

Aman. I believe it is near the time Loveless said he would be at home. He talked of accepting of Lord Foppington's invitation to sup at Sir Tunbelly Clumsy's.

Col. Town. His lordship has done me the honour to invite me also. If you'll let me escort you, I'll let you into a mystery as we go, in which you must play a part when we arrive.

Aman. But we have two hours yet to spare; the carriages are not ordered till eight, and it is not a five minutes' drive. So, cousin, let us keep the colonel to play at piquet with us, till Mr. Loveless comes home.

Ber. As you please, madam; but you know I have a letter to write.

Col. Town. Madam, you know you may command me, though I am a very wretched gamester.

Aman. Oh, you play well enough to lose your money, and that's all the ladies require; and so, without any more ceremony, let us go into the next room, and call for cards and candles.

[*Exeunt*

SCENE III.—BERINTHIA'S *Dressing-room.*

Enter LOVELESS.

Love. So, thus far all's well: I have got into her dressing-room, and it being dusk, I think nobody has perceived me steal into the house. I heard Berinthia tell my wife she had some particular letters to write this evening, before she went to Sir Tunbelly's, and here are the implements of correspondence.—How shall I muster up assurance to show myself when she comes? I think she has given me encouragement; and, to do my impudence justice, I have made the most of it.—I hear a

door open, and some one coming. If it should be my wife, what the devil should I say? I believe she mistrusts me, and, by my life, I don't deserve her tenderness. However, I am determined to reform, though not yet. Ha! Berinthia!—So, I'll step in here, till I see what sort of humour she is in.

[*Goes into the closet.*

Enter BERINTHIA.

Ber. Was ever so provoking a situation! To think I should sit and hear him compliment Amanda to my face! I have lost all patience with them both! I would not for something have Loveless know what temper of mind they have piqued me into; yet I can't bear to leave them together. No, I'll put my papers away, and return to disappoint them.—[*Goes to the closet.*]—O Lord! a ghost! a ghost! a ghost!

Re-enter LOVELESS.

Love. Peace, my angel; it's no ghost, but one worth a hundred spirits.

Ber. How, sir, have you had the insolence to presume to—— run in again; here's somebody coming.

[LOVELESS *goes into the closet.*

Enter MAID.

Maid. O Lord, ma'am! what's the matter?

Ber. O Heavens! I'm almost frightened out of my wits! I thought verily I had seen a ghost, and 'twas nothing but a black hood pinned against the wall. You may go again; I am the fearfullest fool! [*Exit* MAID.

Re-enter LOVELESS.

Love. Is the coast clear?

Ber. The coast clear! Upon my word, I wonder at your assurance!

Love. Why then you wonder before I have given you a proof of it. But where's my wife?

Ber. At cards.

Love. With whom?

Ber. With Townly.

Love. Then we are safe enough.

Ber. You are so! Some husbands would be of another mind, were he at cards with their wives.

Love. And they'd be in the right on't too; but I dare trust mine.

Ber. Indeed! and she, I doubt not, has the same confidence

in you. Yet do you think she'd be content to come and find you here?

Love. Egad, as you say, that's true!—Then, for fear she should come, hadn't we better go into the next room, out of her way?

Ber. What, in the dark?

Love. Ay, or with a light, which you please.

Ber. You are certainly very impudent.

Love. Nay, then—let me conduct you, my angel!

Ber. Hold, hold! you are mistaken in your angel, I assure you.

Love. I hope not; for by this hand I swear——

Ber. Come, come, let go my hand, or I shall hate you!—I'll cry out, as I live!

Love. Impossible! you cannot be so cruel.

Ber. Ha! here's some one coming. Begone instantly.

Love. Will you promise to return, if I remain here?

Ber. Never trust myself in a room again with you while I live.

Love. But I have something particular to communicate to you.

Ber. Well, well, before we go to Sir Tunbelly's, I'll walk upon the lawn. If you are fond of a moonlight evening, you'll find me there.

Love. I'faith, they're coming here now!—I take you at your word. [*Exit into the closet.*

Ber. 'Tis Amanda, as I live! I hope she has not heard his voice; though I mean she should have her share of jealousy in her turn.

Enter AMANDA.

Aman. Berinthia, why did you leave me?

Ber. I thought I only spoiled your party.

Aman. Since you have been gone, Townly has attempted to renew his importunities. I must break with him, for I cannot venture to acquaint Mr. Loveless with his conduct.

Ber. Oh, no! Mr. Loveless mustn't know of it by any means.

Aman. Oh, not for the world!—I wish, Berinthia, you would undertake to speak to Townly on the subject.

Ber. Upon my word, it would be a very pleasant subject for me to talk upon! But, come, let us go back; and you may depend on't I'll not leave you together again, if I can help it.

[*Exeunt.*

Re-enter LOVELESS.

Love. So—so! a pretty piece of business I have overheard!

Townly makes love to my wife, and I am not to know it for all the world. I must inquire into this—and, by Heaven, if I find that Amanda has, in the smallest degree—yet what have I been at here!—Oh, 'sdeath! that's no rule.

That wife alone unsullied credit wins,
Whose virtues can atone her husband's sins.
Thus, while the man has other nymphs in view,
It suits the woman to be doubly true. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Garden behind* LOVELESS'S *Lodgings.*

Enter LOVELESS.

Love. Now, does she mean to make a fool of me, or not! I shan't wait much longer, for my wife will soon be inquiring for me to set out on our supping party. Suspense is at all times the devil, but of all modes of suspense, the watching for a loitering mistress is the worst.—But let me accuse her no longer; she approaches with one smile to o'erpay the anxieties of a year.

Enter BERINTHIA.

O Berinthia, what a world of kindness are you in my debt! had you stayed five minutes longer——

Ber. You would have gone, I suppose?

Love. Egad, she's right enough. [*Aside.*

Ber. And I assure you 'twas ten to one that I came at all. In short, I begin to think you are too dangerous a being to trifle with; and as I shall probably only make a fool of you at last, I believe we had better let matters rest as they are.

Love. You cannot mean it, sure?

Ber. What more would you have me give to a married man?

Love. How doubly cruel to remind me of my misfortunes!

Ber. A misfortune to be married to so charming a woman as Amanda?

Love. I grant all her merit, but——'sdeath! now see what you have done by talking of her—she's here, by all that's unlucky, and Townly with her.—I'll observe them.

Ber. O Gad, we had better get out of the way; for I should feel as awkward to meet her as you.

Love. Ay, if I mistake not, I see Townly coming this way also. I must see a little into this matter. [*Steps aside.*

Ber. Oh, if that's your intention, I am no woman if I suffer myself to be outdone in curiosity. [*Goes on the other side.*

Enter AMANDA.

Aman. Mr. Loveless come home, and walking on the lawn! I will not suffer him to walk so late, though perhaps it is to show his neglect of me.—Mr. Loveless, I must speak with you.—Ha! Townly again! How I am persecuted!

Enter COLONEL TOWNLY.

Col. Town. Madam, you seem disturbed.

Aman. Sir, I have reason.

Col. Town. Whatever be the cause, I would to Heaven it were in my power to bear the pain, or to remove the malady.

Aman. Your interference can only add to my distress.

Col. Town. Ah, madam, if it be the sting of unrequited love you suffer from, seek for your remedy in revenge: weigh well the strength and beauty of your charms, and rouse up that spirit a woman ought to bear. Disdain the false embraces of a husband. See at your feet a real lover; his zeal may give him title to your pity, although his merit cannot claim your love.

Love. So, so, very fine, i'faith! [*Aside.*

Aman. Why do you presume to talk to me thus? Is this your friendship to Mr. Loveless? I perceive you will compel me at last to acquaint him with your treachery.

Col. Town. He could not upbraid me if you were.—He deserves it from me; for he has not been more false to you than faithless to me.

Aman. To you?

Col. Town. Yes, madam; the lady for whom he now deserts those charms which he was never worthy of, was mine by right; and, I imagine too, by inclination. Yes, madam, Berinthia, who now——

Aman. Berinthia! Impossible!

Col. Town. 'Tis true, or may I never merit your attention. She is the deceitful sorceress who now holds your husband's heart in bondage.

Aman. I will not believe it.

Col. Town. By the faith of a true lover, I speak from conviction. This very day I saw them together, and overheard——

Aman. Peace, sir! I will not even listen to such slander—this is a poor device to work on my resentment, to listen to your insidious addresses. No, sir; though Mr. Loveless may be capable of error, I am convinced I cannot be deceived so grossly in him as to believe what you now report; and for Berinthia, you should have fixed on some more probable person

for my rival than her who is my relation and my friend: for while I am myself free from guilt, I will never believe that love can beget injury, or confidence create ingratitude.

Col. Town. If I do not prove to you—

Aman. You never shall have an opportunity. From the artful manner in which you first showed yourself to me, I might have been led, as far as virtue permitted, to have thought you less criminal than unhappy; but this last unmanly artifice merits at once my resentment and contempt. [*Exit.*

Col. Town. Sure there's divinity about her; and she has dispensed some portion of honour's light to me: yet can I bear to lose Berinthia without revenge or compensation? Perhaps she is not so culpable as I thought her. I was mistaken when I began to think lightly of Amanda's virtue, and may be in my censure of my Berinthia. Surely I love her still, for I feel I should be happy to find myself in the wrong. [*Exit.*

Re-enter LOVELESS *and* BERINTHIA.

Ber. Your servant, Mr. Loveless.

Love. Your servant, madam.

Ber. Pray what do you think of this?

Love. Truly, I don't know what to say.

Ber. Don't you think we steal forth two contemptible creatures?

Love. Why tolerably so, I must confess.

Ber. And do you conceive it possible for you ever to give Amanda the least uneasiness again?

Love. No, I think we never should indeed.

Ber. We! why, monster, you don't pretend that I ever entertained a thought?

Love. Why then, sincerely and honestly, Berinthia, there is something in my wife's conduct which strikes me so forcibly, that if it were not for shame, and the fear of hurting you in her opinion, I swear I would follow her, confess my error, and trust to her generosity for forgiveness.

Ber. Nay, pr'ythee, don't let your respect for me prevent you; for as my object in trifling with you was nothing more than to pique Townly, and as I perceive he has been actuated by a similar motive, you may depend on't I shall make no mystery of the matter to him.

Love. By no means inform him; for though I may choose to pass by his conduct without resentment, how will he presume to look me in the face again?

Ber. How will you presume to look him in the face again?

Love. He, who has dared to attempt the honour of my wife!

Ber. You, who have dared to attempt the honour of his mistress! Come, come, be ruled by me, who affect more levity than I have, and don't think of anger in this cause. A readiness to resent injuries is a virtue only in those who are slow to injure.

Love. Then I will be ruled by you; and when you think proper to undeceive Townly, may your good qualities make as sincere a convert of him as Amanda's have of me.—When truth's extorted from us, then we own the robe of virtue is a sacred habit.

Could women but our secret counsel scan—
Could they but reach the deep reserve of man—
To keep our love they'd rate their virtue high,
They live together, and together die. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* SIR TUNBELLY CLUMSY'S *House.*

Enter MISS HOYDEN, NURSE, *and* TOM FASHION.

Fash. This quick despatch of the chaplain's I take so kindly, it shall give him claim to my favour as long as I live, I assure you.

Miss Hoyd. And to mine too, I promise you.

Nurse. I most humbly thank your honours; and may your children swarm about you like bees about a honeycomb!

Miss Hoyd. Ecod, with all my heart—the more the merrier, I say—ha, nurse?

Enter LORY.

Lory. One word with you, for Heaven's sake.

[*Taking* TOM FASHION *hastily aside.*

Fash. What the devil's the matter?

Lory. Sir, your fortune's ruined if you are not married. Yonder's your brother arrived, with two coaches and six horses, twenty footmen, and a coat worth fourscore pounds—so judge what will become of your lady's heart.

Fash. Is he in the house yet?

Lory. No, they are capitulating with him at the gate. Sir Tunbelly luckily takes him for an impostor; and I have told him that we have heard of this plot before.

Fash. That's right.—[*Turning to* MISS HOYDEN.] My dear, here's a troublesome business my man tells me of, but don't be frightened; we shall be too hard for the rogue. Here's an impudent fellow at the gate (not knowing I was come hither incognito) has taken my name upon him, in hopes to run away with you.

Miss Hoyd. Oh, the brazen-faced varlet! it's well we are married, or maybe we might never have been so.

Fash. [*Aside.*] Egad, like enough.—[*Aloud.*] Pr'ythee, nurse, run to Sir Tunbelly, and stop him from going to the gate before I speak with him.

Nurse. An't please your honour, my lady and I had best lock ourselves up till the danger be over.

Fash. Do so, if you please.

Miss Hoyd. Not so fast; I won't be locked up any more, now I'm married.

Fash. Yes, pray, my dear, do, till we have seized this rascal.

Miss Hoyd. Nay, if you'll pray me, I'll do anything.

[*Exit with* NURSE.

Fash. Hark you, sirrah, things are better than you imagine. The wedding's over.

Lory. The devil it is, sir! [*Capers about.*

Fash. Not a word—all's safe—but Sir Tunbelly don't know it, nor must not yet. So I am resolved to brazen the brunt of the business out, and have the pleasure of turning the impostor upon his lordship, which I believe may easily be done.

Enter SIR TUNBELLY CLUMSY.

Did you ever hear, sir, of so impudent an undertaking?

Sir Tun. Never, by the mass; but we'll tickle him, I'll warrant you.

Fash. They tell me, sir, he has a great many people with him, disguised like servants.

Sir Tun. Ay, ay, rogues enow, but we have mastered them. We only fired a few shot over their heads, and the regiment scoured in an instant.—Here, Tummas, bring in your prisoner.

Fash. If you please, Sir Tunbelly, it will be best for me not to confront the fellow yet, till you have heard how far his impudence will carry him.

Sir Tun. Egad, your lordship is an ingenious person. Your lordship then will please to step aside.

Lory. [*Aside.*] 'Fore heaven, I applaud my master's modesty!

[*Exit with* TOM FASHION.

Enter SERVANTS, *with* LORD FOPPINGTON *disarmed.*

Sir Tun. Come, bring him along, bring him along.

Lord Fop. What the plague do you mean, gentlemen? is it fair time, that you are all drunk before supper?

Sir Tun. Drunk, sirrah! here's an impudent rogue for you now. Drunk or sober, bully, I'm a justice o' the peace, and know how to deal with strollers.

Lord Fop. Strollers!

Sir Tun. Ay, strollers. Come, give an account of yourself. What's your name? where do you live? do you pay scot and lot? Come, are you a freeholder or a copyholder?

Lord Fop. And why dost thou ask me so many impertinent questions?

Sir Tun. Because I'll make you answer 'em, before I have done with you, you rascal you!

Lord Fop. Before Gad, all the answers I can make to them is, that you are a very extraordinary old fellow, stap my vitals!

Sir Tun. Nay, if thou art joking deputy lieutenants, we know how to deal with you.—Here, draw a warrant for him immediately.

Lord Fop. A warrant! What the devil is't thou wouldst be at, old gentleman?

Sir Tun. I would be at you, sirrah, (if my hands were not tied as a magistrate,) and with these two double fists beat your teeth down your throat, you dog you! [*Driving him.*

Lord Fop. And why wouldst thou spoil my face at that rate?

Sir Tun. For your design to rob me of my daughter, villain.

Lord Fop. Rob thee of thy daughter! Now do I begin to believe I am in bed and asleep, and that all this is but a dream. Pr'ythee, old father, wilt thou give me leave to ask thee one question?

Sir Tun. I can't tell whether I will or not, till I know what it is.

Lord Fop. Why, then, it is, whether thou didst not write to my Lord Foppington, to come down and marry thy daughter?

Sir Tun. Yes, marry, did I, and my Lord Foppington is come down, and shall marry my daughter before she's a day older.

Lord Fop. Now give me thy hand, old dad; I thought we should understand one another at last.

Sir Tun. The fellow's mad!—Here, bind him hand and foot. [*They bind him.*

Lord Fop. Nay, pr'ythee, knight, leave fooling; thy jest begins to grow dull.

Sir Tun. Bind him, I say—he's mad: bread and water, a dark room, and a whip, may bring him to his senses again.

Lord Fop. Pr'ythee, Sir Tunbelly, why should you take such an aversion to the freedom of my address as to suffer the rascals thus to skewer down my arms like a rabbit!—[*Aside.*] Egad, if I don't awake, by all that I can see, this is like to prove one of the most impertinent dreams that ever I dreamt in my life.

Re-enter MISS HOYDEN *and* NURSE.

Miss Hoyd. [*Going up to* LORD FOPPINGTON.] Is this he that would have run—Fough, how he stinks of sweets!—Pray, father, let him be dragged through the horse-pond.

Lord Fop. This must be my wife, by her natural inclination to her husband. [*Aside.*

Miss Hoyd. Pray, father, what do you intend to do with him—hang him?

Sir Tun. That, at least, child.

Nurse. Ay, and it's e'en too good for him too.

Lord Fop. Madame la gouvernante, I presume: hitherto this appears to me to be one of the most extraordinary families that ever man of quality matched into. [*Aside.*

Sir Tun. What's become of my lord, daughter?

Miss Hoyd. He's just coming, sir.

Lord Fop. My lord, what does he mean by that, now! [*Aside.*

Re-enter TOM FASHION *and* LORY.

Stap my vitals, Tam, now the dream's out! [*Runs.*

Fash. Is this the fellow, sir, that designed to trick me of your daughter?

Sir Tun. This he, my lord. How do you like him? is not he a pretty fellow to get a fortune?

Fash. I find by his dress he thought your daughter might be taken with a beau.

Miss Hoyd. Oh, gemini! is this a beau? let me see him again. [*Surveys him.*] Ha! I find a beau is no such ugly thing, neither.

Fash. [*Aside.*] Egad, she'll be in love with him presently—I'll e'en have him sent away to jail.—[*To* LORD FOPPINGTON.] Sir, though your undertaking shows you a person of no extraordinary modesty, I suppose you han't confidence enough to expect much favour from me?

Lord Fop. Strike me dumb, Tam, thou art a very impudent fellow.

Nurse. Look, if the varlet has not the effrontery to call his lordship plain Thomas!

Lord Fop. My Lord Foppington, shall I beg one word with your lordship?

Nurse. Ho, ho! it's my lord with him now! See how afflictions will humble folks.

Miss Hoyd. Pray, my lord—[*To* FASHION]—don't let him whisper too close, lest he bite your ear off.

Lord Fop. I am not altogether so hungry as your ladyship is pleased to imagine.—[*Aside to* TOM FASHION.] Look you, Tam, I am sensible I have not been so kind to you as I ought, but I hope you'll forgive what's past, and accept of the five thousand pounds I offer—thou mayst live in extreme splendour with it, stap my vitals!

Fash. It's a much easier matter to prevent a disease than to cure it. A quarter of that sum would have secured your mistress, twice as much cannot redeem her.

[*Aside to* LORD FOPPINGTON.

Sir Tun. Well, what says he?

Fash. Only the rascal offered me a bribe to let him go.

Sir Tun. Ay, he shall go, with a plague to him!—lead on, constable.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Sir, here is Muster Loveless, and Muster Colonel Townly, and some ladies to wait on you. [*To* TOM FASHION.

Lory. [*Aside to* TOM FASHION.] So, sir, what will you do now?

Fash. [*Aside to* LORY.] Be quiet; they are in the plot.—[*Aloud.*] Only a few friends, Sir Tunbelly, whom I wish to introduce to you.

Lord Fop. Thou art the most impudent fellow, Tam, that ever nature yet brought into the world.—Sir Tunbelly, strike me speechless, but these are my friends and acquaintance, and my guests, and they will soon inform thee whether I am the true Lord Foppington or not.

Enter LOVELESS, COLONEL TOWNLY, AMANDA, *and* BERINTHIA. —LORD FOPPINGTON *accosts them as they pass, but none answer him.*

Fash. So, gentlemen, this is friendly; I rejoice to see you.

Col. Town. My lord, we are fortunate to be the witnesses of your lordship's happiness.

Love. But your lordship will do us the honour to introduce us to Sir Tunbelly Clumsy?

Aman. And us to your lady.

Lord Fop. Gad take me, but they are all in a story!

[*Aside.*

Sir Tun. Gentlemen, you do me much honour; my Lord Foppington's friends will ever be welcome to me and mine.

Fash. My love, let me introduce you to these ladies.

Miss Hoyd. By goles, they look so fine and so stiff, I am almost ashamed to come nigh 'em.

Aman. A most engaging lady indeed!

Miss Hoyd. Thank ye, ma'am.

Ber. And I doubt not will soon distinguish herself in the beau-monde.

Miss Hoyd. Where is that?

Fash. You'll soon learn, my dear.

Love. But Lord Foppington——

Lord Fop. Sir!

Love. Sir! I was not addressing myself to you, sir!—Pray who is this gentleman? He seems rather in a singular predicament——

Col. Town. For so well-dressed a person, a little oddly circumstanced, indeed.

Sir Tun. Ha! ha! ha!—So, these are your friends and your guests, ha, my adventurer?

Lord Fop. I am struck dumb with their impudence, and cannot positively say whether I shall ever speak again or not.

Sir Tun. Why, sir, this modest gentleman wanted to pass himself upen me as Lord Foppington, and carry off my daughter.

Love. A likely plot to succeed, truly, ha! ha!

Lord Fop. As Gad shall judge me, Loveless, I did not expect this from thee. Come, pr'ythee confess the joke; tell Sir Tunbelly that I am the real Lord Foppington, who yesterday made love to thy wife; was honoured by her with a slap on the face, and afterwards pinked through the body by thee.

Sir Tun. A likely story, truly, that a peer would behave thus.

Love. A pretty fellow, indeed, that would scandalize the character he wants to assume; but what will you do with him, Sir Tunbelly?

Sir Tun. Commit him, certainly, unless the bride and bridegroom choose to pardon him.

Lord Fop. Bride and bridegroom! For Gad's sake, Sir Tunbelly, 'tis tarture to me to hear you call 'em so.

Miss Hoyd. Why, you ugly thing, what would you have him call us—dog and cat?

Lord Fop. By no means, miss; for that sounds ten times more like man and wife than t'other.

Sir Tun. A precious rogue this to come a-wooing!

Re-enter SERVANT.

Ser. There are some gentlefolks below to wait upon Lord Foppington. [*Exit*

Col. Town. 'Sdeath, Tom, what will you do now?

[*Aside to* TOM FASHION.

Lord Fop. Now, Sir Tunbelly, here are witnesses who I believe are not corrupted.

Sir Tun. Peace, fellow!—Would your lordship choose to have your guests shown here, or shall they wait till we come to 'em?

Fash. I believe, Sir Tunbelly, we had better not have these visitors here yet.—[*Aside.*] Egad, all must out.

Love. Confess, confess; we'll stand by you.

[*Aside to* TOM FASHION.

Lord Fop. Nay, Sir Tunbelly, I insist on your calling evidence on both sides—and if I do not prove that fellow an impostor——

Fash. Brother, I will save you the trouble, by now confessing that I am not what I have passed myself for.—Sir Tunbelly, I am a gentleman, and I flatter myself a man of character; but 'tis with great pride I assure you I am not Lord Foppington.

Sir Tun. Ouns!—what's this?—an impostor?—a cheat?—fire and faggots, sir, if you are not Lord Foppington, who the devil are you?

Fash. Sir, the best of my condition is, I am your son-in-law; and the worst of it is, I am brother to that noble peer.

Lord Fop. Impudent to the last, Gad dem me!

Sir Tun. My son-in-law! not yet, I hope.

Fash. Pardon me, sir; thanks to the goodness of your chaplain, and the kind offices of this gentlewoman.

Lory. 'Tis true, indeed, sir; I gave your daughter away, and Mrs. Nurse, here, was clerk.

Sir Tun. Knock that rascal down!—But speak, Jezebel, how's this?

Nurse. Alas! your honour, forgive me; I have been overreached in this business as well as you. Your worship knows, if the wedding-dinner had been ready, you would have given her away with your own hands.

Sir Tun. But how durst you do this without acquainting me?

Nurse. Alas! if your worship had seen how the poor thing begged and prayed, and clung and twined about me like ivy round an old wall, you would say, I who had nursed it, and reared it, must have had a heart like stone to refuse it.

Sir Tun. Ouns! I shall go mad! Unloose my lord there, you scoundrels!

Lord Fop. Why, when these gentlemen are at leisure, I should be glad to congratulate you on your son-in-law, with a little more freedom of address.

Miss Hoyd. Egad, though, I don't see which is to be my husband after all.

Love. Come, come, Sir Tunbelly, a man of your understanding must perceive that an affair of this kind is not to be mended by anger and reproaches.

Col. Town. Take my word for it, Sir Tunbelly, you are only tricked into a son-in-law you may be proud of: my friend Tom Fashion is as honest a fellow as ever breathed.

Love. That he is, depend on't; and will hunt or drink with you most affectionately: be generous, old boy, and forgive them——

Sir Tun. Never! the hussy!—when I had set my heart on getting her a title.

Lord Fop. Now, Sir Tunbelly, that I am untrussed—give me leave to thank thee for the very extraordinary reception I have met with in thy damned, execrable mansion; and at the same time to assure you, that of all the bumpkins and blockheads I have had the misfortune to meet with, thou art the most obstinate and egregious, strike me ugly!

Sir Tun. What's this? I believe you are both rogues alike.

Lord Fop. No, Sir Tunbelly, thou wilt find to thy unspeakable mortification, that I am the real Lord Foppington, who was to have disgraced myself by an alliance with a clod; and that thou hast matched thy girl to a beggarly younger brother of mine, whose title-deeds might be contained in thy tobacco-box.

Sir Tun. Puppy! puppy!—I might prevent their being beggars, if I chose it; for I could give 'em as good a rent roll as your lordship.

Lord Fop. Ay, old fellow, but you will not do that—for that would be acting like a Christian, and thou art a barbarian, stap my vitals.

Sir Tun. Udzookers! now six such words more, and I'll forgive them directly.

Love. 'Slife, Sir Tunbelly, you should do it, and bless yourself—Ladies, what say you?

Aman. Good Sir Tunbelly, you must consent.

Ber. Come, you have been young yourself, Sir Tunbelly.

Sir Tun. Well then, if I must, I must; but turn—turn that sneering lord out, however, and let me be revenged on somebody. But first look whether I am a barbarian or not; there, children, I join your hands; and when I'm in a better humour, I'll give you my blessing.

Love. Nobly done, Sir Tunbelly! and we shall see you dance at a grandson's christening yet.

Miss Hoyd. By goles, though, I don't understand this! What! an't I to be a lady after all? only plain Mrs. —— What's my husband's name, nurse?

Nurse. Squire Fashion.

Miss Hoyd. Squire, is he?—Well, that's better than nothing.

Lord Fop. [*Aside.*] Now I will put on a philosophic air, and show these people, that it is not possible to put a man of my quality out of countenance.—[*Aloud.*] Dear Tam, since things are fallen out, pr'ythee give me leave to wish thee joy; I do it *de bon cœur*, strike me dumb! You have married into a family of great politeness and uncommon elegance of manners, and your bride appears to be a lady beautiful in person, modest in her deportment, refined in her sentiments, and of nice morality, split my windpipe!

Miss Hoyd. By goles, husband, break his bones, if he calls me names!

Fash. Your lordship may keep up your spirits with your grimace, if you please; I shall support mine, by Sir Tunbelly's favour, with this lady and three thousand pounds a year.

Lord Fop. Well, adieu, Tam!—Ladies, I kiss your hands.—Sir Tunbelly, I shall now quit this thy den; but while I retain the use of my arms, I shall ever remember thou art a demned horrid savage; Ged demn me! [*Exit.*

Sir Tun. By the mass, 'tis well he's gone—for I should ha' been provoked, by-and-by, to ha' dun un a mischief. Well, if this is a lord, I think Hoyden has luck o' her side, in troth.

Col. Town. She has indeed, Sir Tunbelly.—But I hear the fiddles; his lordship, I know, had provided 'em.

Love. Oh, a dance and a bottle, Sir Tunbelly, by all means!

Sir Tun. I had forgot the company below; well—what—we must be merry then, ha? and dance and drink, ha? Well, 'fore George, you shan't say I do these things by halves. Son-in-law there looks like a hearty rogue, so we'll have a night on't: and which of these ladies will be the old man's partner, ha?—Ecod, I don't know how I came to be in so good a humour.

Ber. Well, Sir Tunbelly, my friend and I both will endeavour to keep you so: you have done a generous action, and are entitled to our attention. If you should be at a loss to divert your new guests, we will assist you to relate to them the plot of your daughter's marriage, and his lordship's deserved mortification; a subject which perhaps may afford no bad evening's entertainment.

Sir Tun. Ecod, with all my heart; though I am a main bungler at a long story.

Ber. Never fear; we will assist you, if the tale is judged worth being repeated; but of this you may be assured, that while the intention is evidently to please, British auditors will ever be indulgent to the errors of the performance.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

PIZARRO.

A TRAGEDY.

ADVERTISEMENT.

As the two translations which have been published of Kotzebue's "Spaniards in Peru" have, I understand, been very generally read, the public are in possession of all the materials necessary to form a judgment on the merits and defects of the Play performed at Drury Lane Theatre.

DEDICATION.

To her, whose approbation of this Drama, and whose peculiar delight in the applause it has received from the public, have been to *me* the highest gratification derived from its success—I dedicate this Play.

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AS ORIGINALLY ACTED AT DRURY LANE THEATRE IN 1799.

ATALIBA	*Mr. Powell.*	OLD BLIND MAN	*Mr. Cory.*
ROLLA	*Mr. Kemble.*	BOY	*Master Chatterley.*
OROZEMBO	*Mr. Dowton.*	SENTINEL	*Mr. Holland.*
ORANO	*Mr. Archer.*	ATTENDANT	*Mr. Maddocks.*
ALONZO	*Mr. C. Kemble.*	CORA	*Mrs. Jordan.*
PIZARRO	*Mr. Barrymore.*	ELVIRA	*Mrs. Siddons.*
ALMAGRO	*Mr. Caulfield.*	ZULUGA	
GONZALO	*Mr. Wentworth.*	Peruvian Warriors, Women, *and* Children, High-priest, Priests, *and* Virgins of the Sun, Spanish Officers, Soldiers, Guards, &c., &c.	
DAVILLA	*Mr. Trueman.*		
GOMEZ	*Mr. Surmount.*		
VALVERDE	*Mr. R. Palmer.*		
LAS-CASAS	*Mr. Aickin.*		

SCENE—PERU.

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN.

SPOKEN BY MR. KING.

CHILL'D by rude gales, while yet reluctant May
Withholds the beauties of the vernal day;
As some fond maid, whom matron frowns reprove,
Suspends the smile her heart devotes to love;

The season's pleasures too delay their hour,
And Winter revels with protracted power:
Then blame not, critics, if, thus late, we bring
A Winter Drama—but reproach—the Spring.
What prudent cit dares yet the season trust,
Bask in his whisky, and enjoy the dust?
Horsed in Cheapside, scarce yet the gayer spark
Achieves the Sunday triumph of the Park;
Scarce yet you see him, dreading to be late,
Scour the New Road, and dash through Grosvenor Gate:—
Anxious—yet timorous too—his steed to show,
The hack Bucephalus of Rotten Row.
Careless he seems, yet vigilantly sly,
Woos the gay glance of ladies passing by,
While his off heel, insidiously aside,
Provokes the caper which he seems to chide.
Scarce rural Kensington due honour gains;
The vulgar verdure of her walk remains!
Where night-robed misses amble two by two,
Nodding to booted beaux—"How do, how do?"
With generous questions that no answer wait,
"How vastly full! An't you come vastly late?
Isn't it quite charming? When do you leave town?
An't you quite tired? Pray, can't we sit down?"
These suburb pleasures of a London May,
Imperfect yet, we hail the cold delay;
Should our play please—and you're indulgent ever—
Be your decree—"'Tis better late than never."

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A pavilion near* PIZARRO'S *Tent.*

ELVIRA *discovered sleeping under a canopy.* VALVERDE *enters, gazes on* ELVIRA, *kneels, and attempts to kiss her hand;* ELVIRA, *awakened, rises and looks at him with indignation.*

Elv. Audacious! Whence is thy privilege to interrupt the few moments of repose my harassed mind can snatch amid the tumults of this noisy camp? Shall I inform thy master, Pizarro, of this presumptuous treachery?

Val. I am his servant—it is true—trusted by him—and I know him well; and therefore 'tis I ask, by what magic could Pizarro gain your heart? by what fatality still holds he your affection?

Elv. Hold! thou trusty secretary!

Val. Ignobly born! in mind and manners rude, ferocious, and unpolished, though cool and crafty if occasion need—in youth audacious—ill his first manhood—a licensed pirate—treating men as brutes, the world as booty; yet now the Spanish hero is he styled—the first of Spanish conquerors! and, for a warrior so accomplished, 'tis fit Elvira should leave her noble family, her fame, her home, to share the dangers, humours, and the crimes, of such a lover as Pizarro!

Elv. What! Valverde moralizing! But grant I am in error, what is my incentive? Passion, infatuation, call it as you will; but what attaches thee to this despised, unworthy leader? Base lucre is thy object, mean fraud thy means. Could you gain me, you only hope to win a higher interest in Pizarro. I know you.

Val. On my soul, you wrong me! What else my faults, I have none towards you. But indulge the scorn and levity of your nature; do it while yet the time permits; the gloomy hour, I fear, too soon approaches.

Elv. Valverde a prophet too!

Val. Hear me, Elvira. Shame from his late defeat, and burning wishes for revenge, again have brought Pizarro to Peru; but trust me, he overrates his strength, nor measures well the foe. Encamped in a strange country, where terror cannot force, nor corruption buy a single friend, what have we to hope? The army murmuring at increasing hardships, while Pizarro decorates with gaudy spoil the gay pavilion of his luxury, each day diminishes our force.

Elv. But are you not the heirs of those that fall?

Val. Are gain and plunder, then, our only purpose? Is this Elvira's heroism?

Elv. No, so save me Heaven! I abhor the motive, means, and end of your pursuits; but I will trust none of you. In your whole army there is not one of you that has a heart, or speaks ingenuously—aged Las-Casas, and he alone, excepted.

Val. He! an enthusiast in the opposite and worst extreme!

Elv. Oh! had I earlier known that virtuous man, how different might my lot have been!

Val. I will grant Pizarro could not then so easily have duped you: forgive me, but at that event I still must wonder.

Elv. Hear me, Valverde. When first my virgin fancy waked to love, Pizarro was my country's idol. Self-taught, self-raised, and self-supported, he became a hero; and I was formed to be won by glory and renown. 'Tis known that, when he left

Panama in a slight vessel, his force was not a hundred men. Arrived at the island of Gallo, with his sword he drew a line upon the sands, and said, "Pass those who fear to die or conquer with their leader." Thirteen alone remained, and at the head of these the warrior stood his ground. Even at the moment when my ears first caught this tale, my heart exclaimed, "Pizarro is its lord!" What since I have perceived, or thought, or felt, you must have more worth to win the knowledge of.

Val. I press no further, still assured that, while Alonzo de Molina, our general's former friend and pupil, leads the enemy, Pizarro never more will be a conqueror. [*Trumpets without.*

Elv. Silence! I hear him coming; look not perplexed. How mystery and fraud confound the countenance! Quick, put on an honest face, if thou canst.

Piz. [*Without.*] Chain and secure him; I will examine him myself.

Enter PIZARRO. VALVERDE *bows*—ELVIRA *laughs.*

Piz. Why dost thou smile, Elvira?

Elv. To laugh or weep without a reason is one of the few privileges poor women have.

Piz. Elvira, I will know the cause, I am resolved!

Elv. I am glad of that, because I love resolution, and am resolved not to tell you. Now my resolution, I take it, is the better of the two, because it depends upon myself, and yours does not.

Piz. Psha! trifler!

Val. Elvira was laughing at my apprehensions that——

Piz. Apprehensions!

Val. Yes—that Alonzo's skill and genius should so have disciplined and informed the enemy, as to——

Piz. Alonzo! the traitor! How I once loved that man! His noble mother intrusted him, a boy, to my protection. [ELVIRA *walks about pensively in the background.*] At my table did he feast—in my tent did he repose. I had marked his early genius, and the valorous spirit that grew with it. Often had I talked to him of our early adventures—what storms we struggled with—what perils we surmounted! When landed with a slender host upon an unknown land—then, when I told how famine and fatigue, discord and toil, day by day, did thin our ranks amid close-pressing enemies—how still undaunted I endured and dared—maintained my purpose and my power in despite of growling mutiny or bold revolt, till with my faithful few remaining I became at last victorious!—when, I say, of

these things I spoke, the youth Alonzo, with tears of wonder and delight, would throw him on my neck, and swear his soul's ambition owned no other leader.

Val. What could subdue attachment so begun?

Piz. Las-Casas.—He it was, with fascinating craft and canting precepts of humanity, raised in Alonzo's mind a new enthusiasm, which forced him, as the stripling termed it, to forego his country's claims for those of human nature.

Val. Yes, the traitor left you, joined the Peruvians, and became thy enemy, and Spain's.

Piz. But first with weariless remonstrance he sued to win me from my purpose, and untwine the sword from my determined grasp. Much he spoke of right, of justice, and humanity, calling the Peruvians our innocent and unoffending brethren.

Val. They! Obdurate heathens! They our brethren!

Piz. But, when he found that the soft folly of the pleading tears he dropped on my bosom fell on marble, he flew and joined the foe: then, profiting by the lessons he had gained in wronged Pizarro's school, the youth so disciplined and led his new allies, that soon he forced me—ha! I burn with shame and fury while I own it!—in base retreat and foul discomfiture to quit the shore.

Val. But the hour of revenge is come.

Piz. It is; I am returned: my force is strengthened, and the audacious boy shall soon know that Pizarro lives, and has—a grateful recollection of the thanks he owes him.

Val. 'Tis doubted whether still Alonzo lives.

Piz. 'Tis certain that he does; one of his armour-bearers is just made prisoner: twelve thousand is their force, as he reports, led by Alonzo and Peruvian Rolla. This day they make a solemn sacrifice on their ungodly altars. We must profit by their security, and attack them unprepared—the sacrificers shall become the victims.

Elv. Wretched innocents! And their own blood shall bedew their altars!

Piz. Right!—[*Trumpets without.*] Elvira, retire!

Elv. Why should I retire?

Piz. Because men are to meet here, and on manly business.

Elv. O men! men! ungrateful and perverse! O woman! still affectionate though wronged! [VALVERDE *retires back.*] The being to whose eyes you turn for animation, hope, and rapture, through the days of mirth and revelry; and on whose bosoms, in the hour of sore calamity, you seek for rest and consolation; then, when the pompous follies of your mean ambi-

tion are the question, you treat as playthings or as slaves!—I shall not retire.

Piz. Remain, then; and, if thou canst, be silent.

Elv. They only babble who practise not reflection. I shall think—and thought is silence.

Piz. [*Aside.*] Ha! there's somewhat in her manner lately—— [*Looks sternly and suspiciously at* ELVIRA, *who meets his glance with a commanding and unaltered eye.*

Enter LAS-CASAS, ALMAGRO, GONZALO, DAVILLA, OFFICERS, *and* SOLDIERS.—*Trumpets without.*

Las-Cas. Pizarro, we attend thy summons.

Piz. Welcome, venerable father!—My friends, most welcome! Friends and fellow-soldiers, at length the hour is arrived, which to Pizarro's hopes presents the full reward of our undaunted enterprise and long-enduring toils. Confident in security, this day the foe devotes to solemn sacrifice; if with bold surprise we strike on their solemnity—trust to your leader's word—we shall not fail.

Alm. Too long inactive have we been mouldering on the coast; our stores exhausted, and our soldiers murmuring. Battle! battle!—then death to the armed, and chains for the defenceless.

Dav. Death to the whole Peruvian race!

Las-Cas. Merciful Heaven!

Alm. Yes, general, the attack, and instantly! Then shall Alonzo, basking at his ease, soon cease to scoff our sufferings, and scorn our force.

Las-Cas. Alonzo!—scorn and presumption are not in his nature.

Alm. 'Tis fit Las-Casas should defend his pupil.

Piz. Speak not of the traitor, or hear his name but as the bloody summons to assault and vengeance. It appears we are agreed.

Alm. Dav. We are.

Gon. All.—Battle! battle!

Las-Cas. Is, then, the dreadful measure of your cruelty not yet complete? Battle! gracious Heaven! against whom! Against a king, in whose mild bosom your atrocious injuries even yet have not excited hate! but who, insulted or victorious, still sues for peace. Against a people who never wronged the living being their Creator formed: a people who, children of innocence! received you as cherished guests with eager hospitality and confiding kindness. Generously and freely did they

share with you their comforts, their treasures, and their homes: you repaid them by fraud, oppression, and dishonour. These eyes have witnessed all I speak—as gods you were received, as fiends have you acted.

Piz. Las-Casas!

Las-Cas. Pizarro, hear me!—Hear me, chieftains!—And thou, all-powerful! whose thunders can shiver into sand the adamantine rock—whose lightnings can pierce to the core the rived and quaking earth—oh, let thy power give effect to thy servant's words, as thy spirit gives courage to his will! Do not, I implore you, chieftains—countrymen—do not, I implore you, renew the foul barbarities which your insatiate avarice has inflicted on this wretched, unoffending race!—But hush, my sighs! fall not, drops of useless sorrow!—heart-breaking anguish, choke not my utterance!—All I entreat is, send me once more to those you call your enemies.—Oh! let me be the messenger of penitence from you; I shall return with blessings and with peace from them.—[*Turning to* ELVIRA.] Elvira, you weep.—Alas! and does this dreadful crisis move no heart but thine?

Alm. Because there are no women here but she and thou.

Piz. Close this idle war of words: time flies, and our opportunity will be lost. Chieftains, are ye for instant battle?

Alm. We are.

Las-Cas. Oh! men of blood!—[*Kneels.*] God! thou hast anointed me thy servant—not to curse, but to bless my countrymen: yet now my blessing on their force were blasphemy against thy goodness.—[*Rises.*] No! I curse your purpose, homicides! I curse the bond of blood by which you are united. May fell division, infamy, and rout, defeat your projects and rebuke your hopes! On you, and on your children, be the peril of the innocent blood which shall be shed this day! I leave you, and for ever! No longer shall these aged eyes be seared by the horrors they have witnessed. In caves, in forests, will I hide myself; with tigers and with savage beasts will I commune; and when at length we meet before the blessed tribunal of that Deity, whose mild doctrines and whose mercies ye have this day renounced, then shall you feel the agony and grief of soul which tear the bosom of your accuser now!

[*Going.*

Elv. [*Rises and takes the hand of* LAS-CASAS.] Las-Casas! Oh, take me with thee, Las-Casas!

Las-Cas. Stay! lost, abused lady! I alone am useless here. Perhaps thy loveliness may persuade to pity, where reason and

religion plead in vain. Oh! save thy innocent fellow-creatures if thou canst: then shall thy frailty be redeemed, and thou wilt share the mercy thou bestowest. [*Exit.*

Pis. How, Elvira! wouldst thou leave me?

Elv. I am bewildered, grown terrified! Your inhumanity—and that good Las-Casas—oh! he appeared to me just now something more than heavenly: and you! ye all looked worse than earthly.

Pis. Compassion sometimes becomes a beauty.

Elv. Humanity always becomes a conqueror.

Alm. Well! Heaven be praised, we are rid of the old moralist.

Gon. I hope he'll join his preaching pupil, Alonzo.

Pis. [*Turning to* ALMAGRO.] Now to prepare our muster and our march. At midday is the hour of sacrifice. [ELVIRA *sits.*] Consulting with our guides, the route of your divisions shall be given to each commander. If we surprise, we conquer; and, if we conquer, the gates of Quito will be open to us.

Alm. And Pizarro then be monarch of Peru.

Pis. Not so fast—ambition for a time must take counsel from discretion. Ataliba still must hold the shadow of a sceptre in his hand—Pizarro still appear dependent upon Spain: while the pledge of future peace, his daughter's hand, [ELVIRA *rises much agitated,*] secures the proud succession to the crown I seek.

Alm. This is best. In Pizarro's plans observe the statesman's wisdom guides the warrior's valour.

Val. [*Aside to* ELVIRA.] You mark, Elvira?

Elv. Oh, yes—this is best—this is excellent!

Pis. You seem offended. Elvira still retains my heart. Think—a sceptre waves me on.

Elv. Offended?—no! Thou knowest thy glory is my idol; and this will be most glorious, most just and honourable.

Pis. What mean you?

Elv. Oh, nothing!—mere woman's prattle—a jealous whim, perhaps: but let it not impede the royal hero's course.—[*Trumpets without.*] The call of arms invites you.—Away! away! you, his brave, his worthy fellow-warriors.

Pis. And go you not with me?

Elv. Undoubtedly! I needs must be first to hail the future monarch of Peru.

Enter GOMEZ.

Alm. How, Gomez? what bringest thou?

Gom. On yonder hill, among the palm-trees, we have surprised an old cacique: escape by flight he could not, and we seized him and his attendant unresisting; yet his lips breathed naught but bitterness and scorn.

Piz. Drag him before us.—[ELVIRA *sits pensively.* GOMEZ *goes out and returns with* OROZEMBO *and* Attendant, *in chains, guarded.*] What art thou, stranger?

Oro. First tell me which among you is the captain of this band of robbers.

Piz. Ha!

Alm. Madman!—Tear out his tongue, or else——

Oro. Thou'lt hear some truth.

Dav. [*Showing his poniard.*] Shall I not plunge this into his heart?

Oro. [*To* PIZARRO.] Does your army boast many such heroes as this?

Piz. Audacious! this insolence has sealed thy doom. Die thou shalt, gray-headed ruffian. But first confess what thou knowest.

Oro. I know that which thou hast just assured me of—that I shall die.

Piz. Less audacity perhaps might have preserved thy life.

Oro. My life is as a withered tree; it is not worth preserving.

Piz. Hear me, old man. Even now we march against the Peruvian army. We know there is a secret path that leads to your stronghold among the rocks: guide us to that, and name thy reward. If wealth be thy wish——

Oro. Ha! ha! ha!

Piz. Dost thou despise my offer?

Oro. Thee and thy offer! Wealth!—I have the wealth of two dear gallant sons—I have stored in heaven the riches which repay good actions here—and still my chiefest treasure do I bear about me.

Piz. What is that? inform me.

Oro. I will; for it never can be thine—the treasure of a pure, unsullied conscience.

[ELVIRA *sits, still paying marked attention to* OROZEMBO.

Piz. I believe there is no other Peruvian who dares speak as thou dost.

Oro. Would I could believe there is no other Spaniard who dares act as thou dost!

Gon. Obdurate Pagan! How numerous is your army?

Oro. Count the leaves of yonder forest.

Alm. Which is the weakest part of your camp?

Oro. It has no weak part; on every side 'tis fortified by justice.

Pis. Where have you concealed your wives and your children?

Oro. In the hearts of their husbands and their fathers.

Pis. Knowest thou Alonzo?

Oro. Know him! Alonzo! Know him! Our nation's benefactor! the guardian angel of Peru!

Pis. By what has he merited that title?

Oro. By not resembling thee.

Alm. Who is this Rolla, joined with Alonzo in command?

Oro. I will answer that; for I love to hear and to repeat the hero's name. Rolla, the kinsman of the king, is the idol of our army; in war a tiger, chafed by the hunter's spear; in peace more gentle than the unweaned lamb. Cora was once betrothed to him; but, finding she preferred Alonzo, he resigned his claim, and, I fear, his peace, to friendship and to Cora's happiness; yet still he loves her with a pure and holy fire.

Pis. Romantic savage!—I shall meet this Rolla soon.

Oro. Thou hadst better not! the terrors of his noble eye would strike thee dead.

Dav. Silence, or tremble!

Oro. Beardless robber! I never yet have trembled before God; why should I tremble before man? Why before thee, thou less than man?

Dav. Another word, audacious heathen, and I strike!

Oro. Strike, Christian! Then boast among thy fellows,—I too have murdered a Peruvian!

Dav. Hell and vengeance seize thee! [*Stabs him.*

Pis. Hold!

Dav. Couldst thou longer have endured his insults?

Pis. And therefore should he die untortured?

Oro. True! Observe, young man—[*To* DAVILLA.] Thy unthinking rashness has saved me from the rack; and thou thyself hast lost the opportunity of a useful lesson; thou mightst thyself have seen with what cruelty vengeance would have inflicted torments—and with what patience virtue would have borne them.

Elv. [*Supporting* OROZEMBO'S *head upon her bosom.*] Oh, ye are monsters all! Look up, thou martyred innocent—look up once more, and bless me ere thou diest. God! how I pity thee!

Oro. Pity me!—me! so near my happiness! Bless thee, lady!—Spaniards—Heaven turn your hearts, and pardon you as I do.

Piz. Away!—[OROZEMBO *is borne off dying.*] Away! Davilla! if thus rash a second time——

Dav. Forgive the hasty indignation which——

Piz. No more! Unbind that trembling wretch—let him depart: 'tis well he should report the mercy which we show to insolent defiance—Hark! our troops are moving.

Attend. [*On passing* ELVIRA.] If through your gentle means my master's poor remains might be preserved from insult——

Elv. I understand thee.

Attend. His sons may yet thank your charity, if not avenge their father's fate. [*Exit.*

Piz. What says the slave?

Elv. A parting word to thank you for your mercy.

Piz. Our guards and guides approach.—[SOLDIERS *march through the tents.*] Follow me, friends—each shall have his post assigned, and ere Peruvia's god shall sink beneath the main, the Spanish banner, bathed in blood, shall float above the walls of vanquished Quito. [*Exeunt all but* ELVIRA *and* VALVERDE.

Val. Is it now presumption that my hopes gain strength with the increasing horrors which I see appal Elvira's soul?

Elv. I am mad with terror and remorse! Would I could fly these dreadful scenes!

Val. Might not Valverde's true attachment be thy refuge?

Elv. What wouldst thou do to save or to avenge me?

Val. I dare do all thy injuries may demand—a word—and he lies bleeding at your feet.

Elv. Perhaps we will speak again of this. Now leave me.—[*Exit* VALVERDE.] No! not this revenge—no! not this instrument. Fie, Elvira! even for a moment to counsel with this unworthy traitor! Can a wretch, false to a confiding master, be true to any pledge of love or honour?—Pizarro will abandon me—yes; me—who, for his sake, have sacrificed—oh, God! what have I not sacrificed for him! Yet, curbing the avenging pride that swells this bosom, I still will further try him. Oh, men! ye who, wearied by the fond fidelity of virtuous love, seek in the wanton's flattery a new delight, oh, ye may insult and leave the hearts to which your faith was pledged, and, stifling self-reproach, may fear no other peril; because such hearts, howe'er you injure and desert them, have yet the proud retreat of an unspotted fame—of unreproaching conscience. But beware the desperate libertine who forsakes the creature whom his arts have first deprived of all natural protection—of all self-consolation! What has he left her? Despair and vengeance! [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Bank surrounded by a wild wood and rocks.*

CORA *is discovered playing with her* CHILD; ALONZO *hanging over them with delight.*

Cora. Now confess, does he resemble thee, or not?

Alon. Indeed, he is liker thee—thy rosy softness, thy smiling gentleness.

Cora. But his auburn hair, the colour of his eyes, Alonzo.—Oh, my lord's image, and my heart's adored!

[*Presses the* CHILD *to her bosom.*

Alon. The little darling urchin robs me, I doubt, of some portion of thy love, my Cora. At least he shares caresses, which till his birth were only mine.

Cora. Oh no, Alonzo! a mother's love for her sweet babe is not a stealth from the dear father's store; it is a new delight that turns with quickened gratitude to Him, the author of her augmented bliss.

Alon. Could Cora think me serious?

Cora. I am sure he will speak soon: then will be the last of the three holidays allowed by Nature's sanction to the fond, anxious mother's heart.

Alon. What are those three?

Cora. The ecstasy of his birth I pass; that in part is selfish: but when the first white blossoms of his teeth appear, breaking the crimson beds that did encase them, that is a day of joy; next, when from his father's arms he runs without support, and clings, laughing and delighted, to his mother's knees, that is the mother's heart's next holiday; and sweeter still the third, whene'er his little stammering tongue shall utter the grateful sound of father! mother!—Oh, that is the dearest joy of all!

Alon. Beloved Cora!

Cora. Oh, my Alonzo! daily, hourly, do I pour thanks to Heaven for the dear blessing I possess in him and thee!

Alon. To Heaven and Rolla!

Cora. Yes, to Heaven and Rolla: and art thou not grateful to them too, Alonzo? art thou not happy?

Alon. Can Cora ask that question?

Cora. Why then of late so restless on thy couch? Why to my waking, watching ear so often does the stillness of the night betray thy struggling sighs?

Alon. Must not I fight against my country, against my brethren?

Cora. Do they not seek our destruction?—and are not all men brethren?

Alon. Should they prove victorious?

Cora. I will fly, and meet thee in the mountains.

Alon. Fly with thy infant, Cora?

Cora. What! think you a mother, when she flies from danger, can feel the weight of her child?

Alon. Cora, my beloved, do you wish to set my heart at rest?

Cora. Oh yes! yes! yes!

Alon. Hasten then to the concealment in the mountains; where all our matrons and virgins, and our warriors' offspring, are allotted to await the issue of the war. Cora will not alone resist her husband's, her sisters', and her monarch's wish.

Cora. Alonzo, I cannot leave you. Oh! how in every moment's absence would my fancy paint you, wounded, alone, abandoned! No, no, I cannot leave you.

Alon. Rolla will be with me.

Cora. Yes, while the battle rages, and where it rages most, brave Rolla will be found. He may revenge, but cannot save thee. To follow danger, he will leave even thee. But I have sworn never to forsake thee but with life. Dear, dear Alonzo, canst thou wish that I should break my vow?

Alon. Then be it so. Oh! excellence in all that's great and lovely, in courage, gentleness, and truth; my pride, my content, my all! Can there on this earth be fools who seek for happiness, and pass by love in the pursuit?

Cora. Alonzo, I cannot thank thee: silence is the gratitude of true affection: who seeks to follow it by sound will miss the track.—[*Shouts without.*] Does the king approach?

Alon. No, 'tis the general placing the guard that will surround the temple during the sacrifice. 'Tis Rolla comes, the first and best of heroes. [*Trumpets sound.*

Rol. [*Without.*] Then place them on the hill fronting the Spanish camp.

Enter ROLLA.

Cora. Rolla! my friend, my brother!

Alon. Rolla! my friend, my benefactor! how can our lives repay the obligations which we owe thee?

Rol. Pass them in peace and bliss. Let Rolla witness it, he is overpaid.

Cora. Look on this child. He is the life-blood of my heart;

but, if ever he loves or reveres thee less than his own father, his mother's hate fall on him!

Rol. Oh, no more! What sacrifice have I made to merit gratitude? The object of my love was Cora's happiness. I see her happy. Is not my object gained, and am I not rewarded? Now, Cora, listen to a friend's advice. Thou must away; thou must seek the sacred caverns, the unprofaned recess, whither, after this day's sacrifice, our matrons, and e'en the virgins of the sun, retire.

Cora. Not secure with Alonzo and with thee, Rolla?

Rol. We have heard Pizarro's plan is to surprise us. Thy presence, Cora, cannot aid, but may impede our efforts.

Cora. Impede!

Rol. Yes, yes. Thou knowest how tenderly we love thee; we, thy husband and thy friend. Art thou near us? our thoughts, our valour—vengeance will not be our own. No advantage will be pursued that leads us from the spot where thou art placed; no succour will be given but for thy protection. The faithful lover dares not be all himself amid the war, until he knows that the beloved of his soul is absent from the peril of the fight.

Alon. Thanks to my friend! 'tis this I would have urged.

Cora. This timid excess of love, producing fear instead of valour, flatters, but does not convince me: the wife is incredulous.

Rol. And is the mother unbelieving too?

Cora. [*Kisses child.*] No more! do with me as you please. My friend, my husband! place me where you will.

Alon. My adored! we thank you both.—[*March without.*] Hark! the king approaches to the sacrifice. You, Rolla, spoke of rumours of surprise. A servant of mine, I hear, is missing; whether surprised or treacherous, I know not.

Rol. It matters not. We are everywhere prepared. Come, Cora, upon the altar 'mid the rocks thou'lt implore a blessing on our cause. The pious supplication of the trembling wife, and mother's heart, rises to the throne of mercy, the most resistless prayer of human homage. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Temple of the Sun.*

The HIGH-PRIEST, PRIESTS, *and* VIRGINS *of the* SUN, *discovered. A solemn march.* ATALIBA *and the* PERUVIAN WARRIORS *enter on one side; on the other* ROLLA, ALONZO, *and* CORA *with the* CHILD.

Ata. Welcome, Alonzo!—[*To* ROLLA.] Kinsman, thy hand!

—[*To* CORA.] Blessed be the object of the happy mother's love.

Cora. May the sun bless the father of his people!

Ata. In the welfare of his children lives the happiness of their king.—Friends, what is the temper of our soldiers?

Rol. Such as becomes the cause which they support; their cry is, Victory or death! our king! our country! and our God.

Ata. Thou, Rolla, in the hour of peril, hast been wont to animate the spirit of their leaders, ere we proceed to consecrate the banners which thy valour knows so well how to guard.

Rol. Yet never was the hour of peril near, when to inspire them word were so little needed. My brave associates—partners of my toil, my feelings, and my fame!—can Rolla's words add vigour to the virtuous energies which inspire your hearts? No! You have judged, as I have, the foulness of the crafty plea by which these bold invaders would delude you. Your generous spirit has compared, as mine has, the motives which, in a war like this, can animate their minds and ours. They, by a strange frenzy driven, fight for power, for plunder, and extended rule: we, for our country, our altars, and our homes. They follow an adventurer whom they fear, and obey a power which they hate: we serve a monarch whom we love—a God whom we adore. Whene'er they move in anger, desolation tracks their progress! Whene'er they pause in amity, affliction mourns their friendship. They boast they come but to improve our state, enlarge our thoughts, and free us from the yoke of error! Yes: they will give enlightened freedom to our minds! who are themselves the slaves of passion, avarice, and pride. They offer us their protection: yes, such protection as vultures give to lambs—covering and devouring them! They call on us to barter all of good we have inherited and proved, for the desperate chance of something better which they promise. Be our plain answer this:—The throne we honour is the people's choice; the laws we reverence are our brave fathers' legacy; the faith we follow teaches us to live in bonds of charity with all mankind, and die with hope of bliss beyond the grave. Tell your invaders this, and tell them too, we seek no change; and, least of all, such change as they would bring us.

[*Loud shouts of the* PERUVIAN WARRIORS.

Ata. [*Embracing* ROLLA.] Now, holy friends, ever mindful of these sacred truths, begin the sacrifice.—[*A solemn procession commences. The* PRIESTS *and* VIRGINS *arrange themselves on either side of the altar, which the* HIGH-PRIEST *approaches, and the solemnity begins. The invocation of the* HIGH-PRIEST *is fol-*

lowed by the choruses of the PRIESTS *and* VIRGINS. *Fire from above lights upon the altar. The whole assembly rise, and join in the thanksgiving.*] Our offering is accepted. Now to arms, my friends; prepare for battle.

Enter ORANO.

Ora. The enemy.

Ata. How near?

Ora. From the hill's brow, e'en now as I o'erlooked their force, suddenly I perceived the whole in motion: with eager haste they march towards our deserted camp, as if apprised of this most solemn sacrifice.

Rol. They must be met before they reach it.

Ata. And you, my daughters, with your dear children, away to the appointed place of safety.

Cora. Oh, Alonzo! [*Embracing him.*

Alon. We shall meet again.

Cora. Bless us once more ere you leave us.

Alon. Heaven protect and bless thee, my beloved; and thee, my innocent!

Ata. Haste, haste! each moment is precious!

Cora. Farewell, Alonzo! Remember thy life is mine.

Rol. [*As she is passing him.*] Not one farewell to Rolla?

Cora. [*Giving him her hand.*] Farewell! The god of war be with you: but bring me back Alonzo. [*Exit with the* CHILD.

Ata. [*Draws his sword.*] Now, my brethren, my sons, my friends, I know your valour. Should ill success assail us, be despair the last feeling of your hearts. If successful let mercy be the first.—Alonzo, to you I give to defend the narrow passage of the mountains. On the right of the wood be Rolla's station. For me straight forwards will I march to meet them, and fight until I see my people saved, or they behold their monarch fall. Be the word of battle—God! and our native land. [*A march. Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Wood between the Temple and the Camp.*

Enter ROLLA *and* ALONZO.

Rol. Here, my friend, we separate—soon, I trust, to meet again in triumph.

Alon. Or perhaps we part to meet no more.—Rolla, a moment's pause; we are yet before our army's strength; one earnest word at parting.

Rol. There is in language now no word but battle.

Alon. Yes, one word—one—Cora!

Rol. Cora!—speak!

Alon. The next hour brings us——

Rol. Death or victory!

Alon. It may be victory to one—death to the other.

Rol. Or both may fall.

Alon. If so, my wife and child I bequeath to the protection of Heaven and my king. But should I only fall, Rolla, be thou my heir.

Rol. How?

Alon. Be Cora thy wife—be thou a father to my child.

Rol. Rouse thee, Alonzo! banish these timid fancies.

Alon. Rolla! I have tried in vain, and cannot fly from the foreboding which oppresses me: thou knowest it will not shake me in the fight: but give me the promise I exact.

Rol. If it be Cora's will—yes—I promise. [*Gives his hand.*

Alon. Tell her it was my last wish; and bear to her and to my son my last blessing!

Rol. I will.—Now then to our posts, and let our swords speak for us. [*They draw their swords.*

Alon. For the king and Cora!

Rol. For Cora and the king.

[*Exeunt severally. Alarms without.*

SCENE IV.—*The Peruvian Camp.*

Enter an OLD BLIND MAN *and a* BOY.

Old Man. Have none returned to the camp?

Boy. One messenger alone. From the temple they all marched to meet the foe.

Old Man. Hark! I hear the din of battle. Oh, had I still retained my sight, I might now have grasped a sword, and died a soldier's death!—Are we quite alone?

Boy. Yes!—I hope my father will be safe!

Old Man. He will do his duty. I am more anxious for thee, my child.

Boy. I can stay with you, dear grandfather.

Old Man. But, should the enemy come, they will drag thee from me, my boy.

Boy. Impossible, grandfather! for they will see at once that you are old and blind, and cannot do without me.

Old Man. Poor child! thou little knowest the hearts of these inhuman men.—[*Discharge of cannon heard.*] Hark! the noise is near. I hear the dreadful roaring of the fiery engines of

these cruel strangers.—[*Shouts at a distance.*] At every shout, with involuntary haste I clench my hand, and fancy still it grasps a sword! Alas! I can only serve my country by my prayers. Heaven preserve the Inca and his gallant soldiers!

Boy. O father! there are soldiers running——

Old Man. Spaniards, boy?

Boy. No, Peruvians!

Old Man. How! and flying from the field!—It cannot be.

Enter two PERUVIAN SOLDIERS.

Oh, speak to them, boy?—whence come you! how goes the battle?

Sold. We may not stop; we are sent for the reserve behind the hill. The day's against us. [*Exeunt* SOLDIERS.

Old Man. Quick, then, quick.

Boy. I see the points of lances glittering in the light.

Old Man. Those are Peruvians. Do they bend this way?

Enter a PERUVIAN SOLDIER.

Boy. Soldiers, speak to my blind father.

Sold. I'm sent to tell the helpless father to retreat among the rocks: all will be lost, I fear. The king is wounded.

Old Man. Quick, boy! Lead me to the hill, where thou mayst view the plain. [*Alarms.*

Enter ATALIBA, *wounded, with* ORANO, OFFICERS, *and* SOLDIERS.

Ata. My wound is bound; believe me, the hurt is nothing. I may return to the fight.

Ora. Pardon your servant; but the allotted priest who attends the sacred banner has pronounced that, the Inca's blood once shed, no blessing can await the day until he leave the field.

Ata. Hard restraint! Oh my poor brave soldiers! Hard that I may no longer be a witness of their valour.—But haste you; return to your comrades; I will not keep one soldier from his post. Go, and avenge your fallen brethren.—[*Exeunt* ORANO, OFFICERS, *and* SOLDIERS.] I will not repine; my own fate is the last anxiety of my heart. It is for you, my people, that I feel and fear.

Old Man. [*Coming forward.*] Did I not hear the voice of an unfortunate?—Who is it that complains thus?

Ata. One almost by hope forsaken.

Old Man. Is the king alive?

Ata. The king still lives.

Old Man. Then thou art not forsaken! Ataliba protects the meanest of his subjects.

Ata. And who shall protect Ataliba?

Old Man. The immortal powers, that protect the just. The virtues of our monarch alike secure to him the affection of his people and the benign regard of Heaven.

Ata. How impious, had I murmured! How wondrous, thou supreme Disposer, are thy acts! Even in this moment, which I had thought the bitterest trial of mortal suffering, thou hast infused the sweetest sensation of my life—it is the assurance of my people's love. [*Aside.*

Boy. [*Turning forward.*] O father!—stranger! see those hideous men that rush upon us yonder!

Ata. Ha! Spaniards! and I—Ataliba—ill-fated fugitive, without a sword even to try the ransom of a monarch's life.

Enter DAVILLA, ALMAGRO, *and* SPANISH SOLDIERS.

Dav. 'Tis he—our hopes are answered—I knew him well—it is the king!

Alm. Away! Follow with your prize. Avoid those Peruvians, though in flight. This way we may regain our line.

[*Exeunt* DAVILLA, ALMAGRO, *and* SOLDIERS, *with* ATALIBA *prisoner.*

Old Man. The king!—wretched old man, that could not see his gracious form!—Boy, would thou hadst led me to the reach of those ruffians' swords!

Boy. Father! all our countrymen are flying here for refuge.

Old Man. No—to the rescue of their king—they never will desert him. [*Alarms without.*

Enter PERUVIAN OFFICERS *and* SOLDIERS, *flying across the stage;* ORANO *following.*

Ora. Hold! I charge you. Rolla calls you.

Officer. We cannot combat with their dreadful engines.

Enter ROLLA.

Rol. Hold! recreants! cowards! What, fear ye death, and fear not shame? By my soul's fury, I cleave to the earth the first of you that stirs, or plunge your dastard swords into your leader's heart, that he no more may witness your disgrace. Where is the king?

Ora. From this old man and boy I learn that the detachment of the enemy, which you observed so suddenly to quit

the field, have succeeded in surprising him; they are yet in sight.

Rol. And bear the Inca off a prisoner?—Hear this, ye base disloyal rout! Look there! The dust you see hangs on the bloody Spaniards' track, dragging with ruffian taunts your king, your father—Ataliba—in bondage! Now fly, and seek your own vile safety if you can.

Old Man. Bless the voice of Rolla—and bless the stroke I once lamented, but which now spares these extinguished eyes the shame of seeing the pale trembling wretches who dare not follow Rolla, though to save their king!

Rol. Shrink ye from the thunder of the foe—and fall ye not at this rebuke? Oh! had ye each but one drop of the loyal blood which gushes to waste through the brave heart of this sightless veteran! Eternal shame pursue you, if you desert me now!—But do—alone I go—alone—to die with glory by my monarch's side!

Soldiers. Rolla! we'll follow thee.

[*Trumpets sound;* ROLLA *rushes out, followed by* ORANO, OFFICERS, *and* SOLDIERS.

Old Man. O godlike Rolla!—And thou sun, send from thy clouds avenging lightning to his aid! Haste, my boy; ascend some height, and tell to my impatient terror what thou seest.

Boy. I can climb this rock, and the tree above.—[*Ascends a rock, and from thence into the tree.*] Oh—now I see them—now—yes—and the Spaniards turning by the steep.

Old Man. Rolla follows them?

Boy. He does—he does—he moves like an arrow! Now he waves his arm to our soldiers.—[*Report of cannon heard.*] Now there is fire and smoke.

Old Man. Yes, fire is the weapon of those fiends.

Boy. The wind blows off the smoke: they are all mixed together.

Old Man. Seest thou the king?

Boy. Yes—Rolla is near him! His sword sheds fire as he strikes!

Old Man. Bless thee, Rolla! Spare not the monsters.

Boy. Father! father! the Spaniards fly!—Oh—now I see the king embracing Rolla.

[*Waves his cap for joy. Shouts of victory, flourish of trumpets, &c.*

Old Man. [*Falls on his knees.*] Fountain of life! how can my exhausted breath bear to thee thanks for this one moment

of my life!—My boy, come down, and let me kiss thee—my strength is gone.

Boy. [*Running to the Old Man.*] Let me help you, father—you tremble so——

Old Man. 'Tis with transport, boy!

[BOY *leads the* OLD MAN *off.* *Shouts, flourish, &c.*

Re-enter ATALIBA, ROLLA, *and* PERUVIAN OFFICERS *and* SOLDIERS.

Ata. In the name of my people, the saviour of whose sovereign thou hast this day been, accept this emblem of his gratitude.—[*Giving* ROLLA *his sun of diamonds.*] The tear that falls upon it may for a moment dim its lustre, yet does it not impair the value of the gift.

Rol. It was the hand of heaven, not mine, that saved my king.

Enter PERUVIAN OFFICER *and* SOLDIERS.

Rol. Now, soldier, from Alonzo?

Off. Alonzo's genius soon repaired the panic which early broke our ranks: but I fear we have to mourn Alonzo's loss: his eager spirit urged him too far in the pursuit!

Ata. How! Alonzo slain?

1*st Sold.* I saw him fall.

2*nd Sold.* Trust me, I beheld him up again and fighting—he was then surrounded and disarmed.

Ata. O victory, dearly purchased!

Rol. O Cora! who shall tell thee this?

Ata. Rolla, our friend is lost—our native country saved! Our private sorrows must yield to the public claim for triumph. Now go we to fulfil the first, the most sacred duty which belongs to victory—to dry the widowed and the orphaned tear of those whose brave protectors have perished in their country's cause. [*Triumphant march, and exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A wild retreat among stupendous rocks.*

CORA *and her* CHILD, *with other* WIVES *and* CHILDREN *of the* PERUVIAN WARRIORS, *discovered.* *They sing alternately stanzas expressive of their situation, with a Chorus, in which all join.*

1*st Wom.* Zuluga, seest thou nothing yet?

Zul. Yes, two Peruvian soldiers—one on the hill, the other entering the thicket in the vale.

2nd Wom. One more has passed.—He comes—but pale and terrified.

Cora. My heart will start from my bosom.

Enter a PERUVIAN SOLDIER *panting for breath.*

Wom. Well! joy or death?

Sold. The battle is against us. The king is wounded and a prisoner.

Wom. Despair and misery!

Cora. [*In a faint voice.*] And Alonzo?

Sold. I have not seen him.

1st Wom. Oh! whither must we fly?

2nd Wom. Deeper into the forest.

Cora. I shall not move.

2nd Sold. [*Without.*] Victory! victory!

Enter another PERUVIAN SOLDIER.

2nd Sold. Rejoice! rejoice! we are victorious!

Wom. [*Springing up.*] Welcome! welcome, thou messenger of joy;—but the king?

2nd Sold. He leads the brave warriors who approach.

[*The triumphant march of the army is heard at a distance. The* WOMEN *and* CHILDREN *join in a strain expressive of anxiety and exultation.*

Enter the PERUVIAN WARRIORS, *singing the Song of Victory.* ATALIBA *and* ROLLA *follow, and are greeted with rapturous shouts.* CORA, *with her* CHILD *in her arms, runs through the ranks searching for* ALONZO.

Ata. Thanks, thanks, my children! I am well, believe it; the blood once stopped, my wound was nothing.

Cora. [*To* ROLLA.] Where is Alonzo?—[ROLLA *turns away in silence.*] Give me my husband; give this child his father.

[*Falls at* ATALIBA'S *feet.*

Ata. I grieve that Alonzo is not here.

Cora. Hoped you to find him?

Ata. Most anxiously.

Cora. Ataliba! is he not dead?

Ata. No! the gods will have heard our prayers.

Cora. Is he not dead, Ataliba?

Ata. He lives—in my heart.

Cora. O king! torture me not thus! Speak out, is this child fatherless?

Ata. Dearest Cora! do not thus dash aside the little hope that still remains.

Cora. The little hope! yet still there is hope! [*Turns to* ROLLA.] Speak to me, Rolla: you are the friend of truth.

Rol. Alonzo has not been found.

Cora. Not found! what mean you? will not you, Rolla, tell me truth? Oh! let me not hear the thunder rolling at a distance; let the bolt fall and crush my brain at once. Say not that he is not found: say at once that he is dead.

Rol. Then should I say false.

Cora. False! Blessings on thee for that word! But snatch me from this terrible suspense.—[CORA *and* CHILD *kneel to* ROLLA.] Lift up thy little hands, my child: perhaps thy ignorance may plead better than thy mother's agony.

Rol. Alonzo is taken prisoner.

Cora. Prisoner! and by the Spaniards?—Pizarro's prisoner? Then is he dead.

Ata. Hope better—the richest ransom which our realm can yield, a herald shall this instant bear.

Peruv. Wom. Oh! for Alonzo's ransom—our gold, our gems!—all! all! Here, dear Cora—here! here!

[*The* PERUVIAN WOMEN *eagerly tear off all their ornaments, and offer them to* CORA.

Ata. Yes, for Alonzo's ransom they would give all!—I thank thee, Father, who has given me such hearts to rule over!

Cora. Now one boon more, beloved monarch. Let me go with the herald.

Ata. Remember, Cora, thou art not a wife only, but a mother too: hazard not your own honour, and the safety of your infant. Among these barbarians the sight of thy youth, thy loveliness, and innocence, would but rivet faster your Alonzo's chains, and rack his heart with added fears for thee. Wait, Cora, the return of the herald.

Cora. Teach me how to live till then.

Ata. Now we go to offer to the gods thanks for our victory, and prayers for our Alonzo's safety.

[*March and procession. Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Wood.*

Enter CORA *and* CHILD.

Cora. Mild innocence, what will become of thee?

Enter ROLLA.

Rol. Cora, I attend thy summons at the appointed spot.

Cora. Oh my child, my boy! hast thou still a father?

Rol. Cora, can thy child be fatherless, while Rolla lives?

Cora. Will he not soon want a mother too? For canst thou think I will survive Alonzo's loss?

Rol. Yes! for his child's sake. Yes, as thou didst love Alonzo, Cora, listen to Alonzo's friend.

Cora. You bid me listen to the world.—Who was not Alonzo's friend?

Rol. His parting words——

Cora. His parting words!—[*Wildly.*] Oh, speak!

Rol. Consigned to me two precious trusts—his blessing to his son, and a last request to thee.

Cora. His last request! his last!—Oh, name it!

Rol. If I fall, said he (and sad forebodings shook him while he spoke), promise to take my Cora for thy wife; be thou a father to my child.—I pledged my word to him, and we parted. Observe me, Cora, I repeat this only, as my faith to do so was given to Alonzo: for myself, I neither cherish claim nor hope.

Cora. Ha! does my reason fail me, or what is this horrid light that presses on my brain? O Alonzo! it may be thou hast fallen a victim to thy own guileless heart: hadst thou been silent, hadst thou not made a fatal legacy of these wretched charms——

Rol. Cora! what hateful suspicion has possessed thy mind?

Cora. Yes, yes, 'tis clear!—his spirit was ensnared; he was led to the fatal spot, where mortal valour could not front a host of murderers. He fell—in vain did he exclaim for help to Rolla. At a distance you looked on and smiled: you could have saved him—could—but did not.

Rol. Oh glorious sun! can I have deserved this?—Cora, rather bid me strike this sword into my heart.

Cora. No!—live! live for love!—for that love thou seekest; whose blossoms are to shoot from the bleeding grave of thy betrayed and slaughtered friend! But thou hast borne to me the last words of my Alonzo! now hear mine: sooner shall this boy draw poison from this tortured breast—sooner would I link me to the pallid corse of the meanest wretch that perished with Alonzo, than he call Rolla father—than I call Rolla husband!

Rol. Yet call me what I am—thy friend, thy protector!

Cora. [*Distractedly.*] Away! I have no protector but my God! With this child in my arms will I hasten to the field of slaughter: there with these hands will I turn up to the light every mangled body, seeking, howe'er by death disfigured, the

sweet smile of my Alonzo: with fearful cries I will shriek out his name till my veins snap! If the smallest spark of life remain, he will know the voice of his Cora, open for a moment his unshrouded eyes, and bless me with a last look. But if we find him not—oh! then, my boy, we will to the Spanish camp —that look of thine will win my passage through a thousand swords—they too are men. Is there a heart that could drive back the wife that seeks her bleeding husband; or the innocent babe that cries for his imprisoned father? No, no, my child, everywhere we shall be safe. A wretched mother, bearing a poor orphan in her arms, has nature's passport through the world. Yes, yes, my son, we'll go and seek thy father.

[*Exit with the* CHILD.

Rol. [*After a pause of agitation.*] Could I have merited one breath of thy reproaches, Cora, I should be the wretch I think I was not formed to be. Her safety must be my present purpose—then to convince her she has wronged me! [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—PIZARRO'S *Tent.*

PIZARRO *discovered, traversing the scene in gloomy and furious agitation.*

Piz. Well, capricious idol, Fortune, be my ruin thy work and boast. To myself I will still be true. Yet, ere I fall, grant me thy smile to prosper in one act of vengeance, and be that smile Alonzo's death.

Enter ELVIRA.

Who's there? who dares intrude? Why does my guard neglect their duty?

Elv. Your guard did what they could—but they knew their duty better than to enforce authority, when I refused obedience.

Piz. And what is it you desire?

Elv. To see how a hero bears misfortune. Thou, Pizarro, art not now collected—nor thyself.

Piz. Wouldst thou I should rejoice that the spears of the enemy, led by accursed Alonzo, have pierced the bravest hearts of my followers?

Elv. No! I would have thee cold and dark as the night that follows the departed storm; still and sullen as the awful pause that precedes nature's convulsion; yet I would have thee feel assured that a new morning shall arise, when the warrior's spirit shall stalk forth—nor fear the future, nor lament the past.

Piz. Woman! Elvira!—why had not all my men hearts like thine?

Elv. Then would thy brows have this day worn the crown of Quito.

Piz. Oh! hope fails me while that scourge of my life and fame, Alonzo, leads the enemy.

Elv. Pizarro, I am come to probe the hero further: not now his courage, but his magnanimity—Alonzo is your prisoner.

Piz. How!

Elv. 'Tis certain; Valverde saw him even now dragged in chains within your camp. I chose to bring you the intelligence myself.

Piz. Bless thee, Elvira, for the news!—Alonzo in my power! —then I am the conqueror! the victory is mine!

Elv. Pizarro, this is savage and unmanly triumph. Believe me, you raise impatience in my mind to see the man whose valour and whose genius awe Pizarro; whose misfortunes are Pizarro's triumph; whose bondage is Pizarro's safety.

Piz. Guard!

Enter GUARD.

Drag here the Spanish prisoner, Alonzo! Quick, bring the traitor here! [*Exit* GUARD.

Elv. What shall be his fate?

Piz. Death! death! in lingering torments! protracted to the last stretch that burning vengeance can devise, and fainting life sustain.

Elv. Shame on thee! Wilt thou have it said that the Peruvians found Pizarro could not conquer till Alonzo felt that he could murder?

Piz. Be it said—I care not. His fate is sealed.

Elv. Follow then thy will: but mark me, if basely thou dost shed the blood of this brave youth, Elvira's lost to thee for ever.

Piz. Why this interest for a stranger? What is Alonzo's fate to thee?

Elv. His fate, nothing! thy glory, everything! Thinkest thou I could love thee, stripped of fame, of honour, and a just renown? Know me better.

Piz. Thou shouldst have known me better. Thou shouldst have known, that, once provoked to hate, I am for ever fixed in vengeance.

Re-enter GUARD *with* ALONZO *in chains.*

Welcome, welcome, Don Alonzo de Molina! 'tis long since we have met: thy mended looks should speak a life of rural indolence. How is it that, amid the toils and cares of war, thou dost preserve the healthful bloom of careless ease? Tell me thy secret.

Alon. Thou wilt not profit by it. Whate'er the toils or cares of war, peace still is here. [*Putting his hand to his heart.*

Piz. Sarcastic boy!

Elv. Thou art answered rightly. Why sport with the unfortunate?

Piz. And thou art wedded too, I hear; ay, and the father of a lovely boy—the heir, no doubt of all his father's loyalty, of all his mother's faith?

Alon. The heir, I trust, of all his father's scorn of fraud, oppression, and hypocrisy—the heir, I hope, of all his mother's virtue, gentleness, and truth—the heir, I am sure, to all Pizarro's hate.

Piz. Really! Now do I feel for this poor orphan; for fatherless to-morrow's sun shall see that child. Alonzo, thy hours are numbered.

Elv. Pizarro—no!

Piz. Hence—or dread my anger.

Elv. I will not hence; nor do I dread thy anger.

Alon. Generous loveliness! spare thy unavailing pity. Seek not to thwart the tiger with the prey beneath his fangs.

Piz. Audacious rebel! thou a renegado from thy monarch and thy God!

Alon. 'Tis false.

Piz. Art thou not, tell me, a deserter from thy country's legions—and, with vile heathens leagued, hast thou not warred against thy native land?

Alon. No! deserter I am none! I was not born among robbers! pirates! murderers! When those legions, lured by the abhorred lust of gold, and by thy foul ambition urged, forgot the honour of Castilians, and forsook the duties of humanity, they deserted me. I have not warred against my native land, but against those who have usurped its power. The banners of my country, when first I followed arms beneath them, were justice, faith, and mercy. If these are beaten down and trampled under foot, I have no country, nor exists the power entitled to reproach me with revolt.

Piz. The power to judge and punish thee at least exists.

Alon. Where are my judges?

Piz. Thou wouldst appeal to the war council?

Alon. If the good Las-Casas have yet a seat there, yes; if not, I appeal to Heaven!

Piz. And, to impose upon the folly of Las-Casas, what would be the excuses of thy treason?

Elv. The folly of Las-Casas! Such, doubtless, his mild

precepts seem to thy hard-hearted wisdom! Oh, would I might have lived as I will die, a sharer in the follies of Las-Casas!

Alon. To him I should not need to urge the foul barbarities which drove me from your side; but I would gently lead him by the hand through all the lovely fields of Quito; there, in many a spot where late was barrenness and waste, I would show him how now the opening blossom, blade, or perfumed bud, sweet bashful pledges of delicious harvest, wafting their incense to the ripening sun, give cheerful promise to the hope of industry. This, I would say, is my work! Next I should tell how hurtful customs and superstitions, strange and sullen, would often scatter and dismay the credulous minds of these deluded innocents; and then would I point out to him where now, in clustered villages, they live like brethren, social and confiding, while through the burning day Content sits basking on the cheek of Toil, till laughing Pastime leads them to the hour of rest—this too is mine! And prouder yet, at that still pause between exertion and repose, belonging not to pastime, labour, or to rest, but unto Him who sanctions and ordains them all, I would show him many an eye, and many a hand, by gentleness from error won, raised in pure devotion to the true and only God!—this too I could tell him is Alonzo's work! Then would Las-Casas clasp me in his aged arms; from his uplifted eyes a tear of gracious thankfulness would fall upon my head, and that one blessed drop would be to me at once this world's best proof, that I had acted rightly here, and surest hope of my Creator's mercy and reward hereafter.

Elv. Happy, virtuous Alonzo! And thou, Pizarro, wouldst appal with fear of death a man who thinks and acts as he does.

Piz. Daring, obstinate enthusiast! But know, the pious blessing of thy preceptor's tears does not await thee here: he has fled like thee—like thee, no doubt, to join the foes of Spain. The perilous trial of the next reward you hope is nearer than perhaps you've thought; for by my country's wrongs, and by mine own, to-morrow's sun shall see thy death!

Elv. Hold! Pizarro, hear me: if not always justly, at least act always greatly. Name not thy country's wrongs; 'tis plain they have no share in thy resentment. Thy fury 'gainst this youth is private hate, and deadly personal revenge; if this be so, and even now thy detected conscience in that look avows it, profane not the name of justice or thy country's cause, but let him arm, and bid him to the field on equal terms.

Piz. Officious advocate for treason—peace! Bear him hence; he knows his sentence. [*Retires back.*

Alon. Thy revenge is eager, and I'm thankful for it—to me thy haste is mercy.—[*To* ELVIRA.] For thee, sweet pleader in misfortune's cause, accept my parting thanks. This camp is not thy proper sphere. Wert thou among yon savages, as they are called, thou'dst find companions more congenial to thy heart.

Piz. Yes; she shall bear the tidings of thy death to Cora.

Alon. Inhuman man! that pang, at least, might have been spared me; but thy malice shall not shake my constancy. I go to death—many shall bless, and none will curse, my memory. Thou wilt still live, and still wilt be—Pizarro. [*Exit, guarded.*

Elv. Now, by the indignant scorn that burns upon my cheek, my soul is shamed and sickened at the meanness of thy vengeance!

Piz. What has thy romantic folly aimed at? He is mine enemy, and in my power.

Elv. He is in your power, and therefore is no more an enemy. Pizarro, I demand not of thee virtue, I ask not from thee nobleness of mind, I require only just dealing to the fame thou hast acquired: be not the assassin of thine own renown. How often have you sworn, that the sacrifice which thy wondrous valour's high report had won you from subdued Elvira, was the proudest triumph of your fame! Thou knowest I bear a mind not cast in the common mould, not formed for tame sequestered love, content mid household cares to prattle to an idle offspring, and wait the dull delight of an obscure lover's kindness: no, my heart was framed to look up with awe and homage to the object it adored; my ears to own no music but the thrilling records of his praise; my lips to scorn all babbling but the tales of his achievements; my brain to turn giddy with delight, reading the applauding tributes of his monarch's and his country's gratitude; my every faculty to throb with transport, while I heard the shouts of acclamation which announced the coming of my hero; my whole soul to love him with devotion! with enthusiasm! to see no other object—to own no other tie—but to make him my world! Thus to love is at least no common weakness. Pizarro! was not such my love for thee?

Piz. It was, Elvira!

Elv. Then do not make me hateful to myself, by tearing off the mask at once, baring the hideous imposture that has undone me! Do not an act which, howe'er thy present power

may gloat it to the world, will make thee hateful to all future ages—accursed and scorned by posterity.

Piz. And, should posterity applaud my deeds, thinkest thou my mouldering bones would rattle then with transport in my tomb! This is renown for visionary boys to dream of; I understand it not. The fame I value shall uplift my living estimation, o'erbear with popular support the envy of my foes, advance my purposes, and aid my power.

Elv. Each word thou speakest, each moment that I hear thee, dispels the fatal mist through which I've judged thee. Thou man of mighty name but little soul, I see thou wert not born to feel what genuine fame and glory are. Go! prefer the flattery of thy own fleeting day to the bright circle of a deathless name—go! prefer to stare upon the grain of sand on which you trample, to musing on the starred canopy above thee. Fame, the sovereign deity of proud ambition, is not to be worshipped so: who seeks alone for living homage stands a mean canvasser in her temple's porch, wooing promiscuously, from the fickle breath of every wretch that passes, the brittle tribute of his praise. He dares not approach the sacred altar—no noble sacrifice of his is placed there, nor ever shall his worshipped image, fixed above, claim for his memory a glorious immortality.

Piz. Elvira, leave me!

Elv. Pizarro, you no longer love me.

Piz. It is not so, Elvira. But what might I not suspect—this wondrous interest for a stranger! Take back thy reproach.

Elv. No, Pizarro; as yet I am not lost to you; one string still remains, and binds me to your fate. Do not, I conjure you—do not, for mine own sake, tear it asunder—shed not Alonzo's blood!

Piz. My resolution's fixed.

Elv. Even though that moment lost you Elvira for ever?

Piz. Even so.

Elv. Pizarro, if not to honour, if not to humanity, yet listen to affection; bear some memory of the sacrifices I have made for thy sake. Have I not for thee quitted my parents, my friends, my fame, my native land? When escaping, did I not risk, in rushing to thy arms, to bury myself in the bosom of the deep? Have I not shared all thy perils—heavy storms at sea, and frightful 'scapes on shore? Even on this dreadful day, amid the rout of battle, who remained firm and constant at Pizarro's side? Who presented her bosom as his shield to the assailing foe?

Piz. 'Tis truly spoken all. In love thou art thy sex's miracle, in war the soldier's pattern; and therefore my whole heart and half my acquisitions are thy right.

Elv. Convince me I possess the first; I exchange all title to the latter for—mercy to Alonzo.

Piz. No more! Had I intended to prolong his doom, each word thou utterest now would hasten on his fate.

Elv. Alonzo then at morn will die?

Piz. Thinkest thou yon sun will set? As surely at his rising shall Alonzo die.

Elv. Then be it done—the string is cracked—sundered for ever. But mark me—thou hast heretofore had cause, 'tis true, to doubt my resolution, howe'er offended; but mark me now—the lips which, cold and jeering, barbing revenge with rancorous mockery, can insult a fallen enemy, shall never more receive the pledge of love: the arm which, unshaken by its bloody purpose, shall assign to needless torture the victim who avows his heart, never more shall press the hand of faith! Pizarro, scorn not my words; beware you slight them not! I feel how noble are the motives which now animate my thoughts. Who could not feel as I do, I condemn: who, feeling so, yet would not act as I shall, I despise!

Piz. I have heard thee, Elvira, and know well the noble motives which inspire thee—fit advocate in virtue's cause! Believe me, I pity thy tender feelings for the youth Alonzo! He dies at sunrise! [*Exit.*

Elv. 'Tis well! 'tis just I should be humbled—I had forgot myself, and in the cause of innocence assumed the tone of virtue. 'Twas fit I should be rebuked—and by Pizarro. Fall, fall, ye few reluctant drops of weakness—the last these eyes shall ever shed. How a woman can love, Pizarro, thou hast known too well—how she can hate, thou hast yet to learn. Yes, thou undaunted!—thou, whom yet no mortal hazard has appalled—thou, who on Panama's brow didst make alliance with the raging elements that tore the silence of that horrid night, when thou didst follow, as thy pioneer, the crashing thunder's drift; and, stalking o'er the trembling earth, didst plant thy banner by the red volcano's mouth!—thou, who when battling on the sea, and thy brave ship was blown to splinters, wast seen, as thou didst bestride a fragment of the smoking wreck, to wave thy glittering sword above thy head, as thou wouldst defy the world in that extremity!—come, fearless man! now meet the last and fellest peril of thy life; meet and survive—an injured woman's fury, if thou canst. [*Exit*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Dungeon.*

ALONZO *is discovered in chains.* *A* SENTINEL *walking near.*

Alon. For the last time I have beheld the shadowed ocean close upon the light. For the last time, through my cleft dungeon's roof, I now behold the quivering lustre of the stars. For the last time, O sun! (and soon the hour) I shall behold thy rising, and thy level beams melting the pale mists of morn to glittering dew-drops. Then comes my death, and in the morning of my day I fall, which—no, Alonzo, date not the life which thou hast run by the mean reckoning of the hours and days which thou hast breathed: a life spent worthily should be measured by a nobler line—by deeds, not years. Then wouldst thou murmur not, but bless the Providence which in so short a span made thee the instrument of wide and spreading blessings to the helplessy and oppressed. Though sinking in decrepit age, he prematurely falls, whose memory records no benefit conferred by him on man. They only have lived long, who have lived virtuously.

Enter a SOLDIER, *shows the* SENTINEL *a passport, who withdraws.*

Alon. What bear you there?

Sold. These refreshments I was ordered to leave in your dungeon.

Alon. By whom ordered?

Sold. By the lady Elvira: she will be here herself before the dawn.

Alon. Bear back to her my humblest thanks; and take thou the refreshments, friend—I need them not.

Sold. I have served under you, Don Alonzo. Pardon my saying, that my heart pities you. [*Exit.*

Alon. In Pizarro's camp, to pity the unfortunate, no doubt requires forgiveness.—[*Looking out.*] Surely, even now, thin streaks of glimmering light steal on the darkness of the east. If so, my life is but one hour more. I will not watch the coming dawn; but in the darkness of my cell, my last prayer to thee, Power Supreme! shall be for my wife and child! Grant them to dwell in innocence and peace; grant health and purity of mind—all else is worthless. [*Retires into the dungeon.*

Sent. Who's there? answer quickly! who's there?

Rol. [*Without.*] A friar come to visit your prisoner.

Enter ROLLA, *disguised as a* MONK.

Rol. Inform me, friend—is not Alonzo, the Spanish prisoner, confined in this dungeon?

Sent. He is.

Rol. I must speak with him.

Sent. You must not. [*Stopping him with his spear.*

Rol. He is my friend.

Sent. Not if he were your brother.

Rol. What is to be his fate?

Sent. He dies at sunrise.

Rol. Ha! then I am come in time.

Sent. Just—to witness his death.

Rol. Soldier, I must speak with him.

Sent. Back, back! It is impossible!

Rol. I do entreat thee but for one moment!

Sent. You entreat in vain; my orders are most strict.

Rol. Even now, I saw a messenger go hence.

Sent. He brought a pass, which we are all accustomed to obey.

Rol. Look on this wedge of massive gold—look on these precious gems. In thy own land they will be wealth for thee and thine beyond thy hope or wish. Take them—they are thine. Let me but pass one minute with Alonzo.

Sent. Away! wouldst thou corrupt me?—me, an old Castilian! I know my duty better.

Rol. Soldier, hast thou a wife?

Sent. I have.

Rol. Hast thou children?

Sent. Four—honest, lovely boys.

Rol. Where didst thou leave them?

Sent. In my native village—even in the cot where myself was born.

Rol. Dost thou love thy children and thy wife?

Sent. Do I love them! God knows my heart—I do.

Rol. Soldier!—imagine thou wert doomed to die a cruel death in this strange land; what would be thy last request?

Sent. That some of my comrades should carry my dying blessing to my wife and children.

Rol. Oh, but if that comrade was at thy prison gate—and should there be told—thy fellow-soldier dies at sunrise—yet thou shalt not for a moment see him—nor shalt thou bear his dying blessing to his poor children or his wretched wife—what wouldst thou think of him who thus could drive thy comrade from the door?

Sent. How!

Rol. Alonzo has a wife and child—I am come but to receive for her and for her babe the last blessing of my friend.

Sent. Go in. [*Retires.*

Rol. Oh, holy Nature! thou dost never plead in vain. There is not, of our earth, a creature bearing form, and life, human or savage, native of the forest wild or giddy air, around whose parent bosom thou hast not a cord entwined of power to tie them to their offspring's claims, and at thy will to draw them back to thee. On iron pinions borne, the blood-stained vulture cleaves the storm, yet is the plumage closest to her breast soft as the cygnet's down, and o'er her unshelled brood the murmuring ringdove sits not more gently! Yes, now he is beyond the porch, barring the outer gate!—Alonzo! Alonzo! my friend! Ha! in gentle sleep!—Alonzo! rise!

Re-enter ALONZO.

Alon. [*Within.*] How! is my hour elapsed? Well—[*Returning from the recess,*] I am ready.

Rol. Alonzo, know me!

Alon. What voice is that?

Rol. 'Tis Rolla's. [*Takes off his disguise.*

Alon. Rolla! my friend!—[*Embraces him.*] Heavens! how couldst thou pass the guard? Did this habit——

Rol. There is not a moment to be lost in words. This disguise I tore from the dead body of a friar, as I passed our field of battle; it has gained me entrance to thy dungeon—now take it thou, and fly.

Alon. And Rolla——

Rol. Will remain here in thy place.

Alon. And die for me. No! rather eternal tortures rack me.

Rol. I shall not die, Alonzo. It is thy life Pizarro seeks, not Rolla's; and from my prison soon will thy arm deliver me. Or, should it be otherwise, I am as a blighted plantain, standing alone amid the sandy desert; nothing seeks or lives beneath my shelter. Thou art a husband, and a father; the being of a lovely wife and helpless infant hangs upon thy life. Go! go! Alonzo! go! to save not thyself, but Cora, and thy child!

Alon. Urge me not thus, my friend! I had prepared to die in peace.

Rol. To die in peace! devoting her thou'st sworn to live for, to madness, misery, and death! For, be assured, the state I left her in forbids all hope but from thy quick return.

Alon. Oh, God!

Rol. If thou art yet irresolute, Alonzo, now heed me well. I think thou hast not known that Rolla ever pledged his word, and shrunk from its fulfilment. And by the heart of truth I swear, if thou art proudly obstinate to deny thy friend the transport of preserving Cora's life, in thee, no power that sways the will of man shall stir me hence; and thou'lt but have the desperate triumph of seeing Rolla perish by thy side, with the assured conviction that Cora and thy child are lost for ever.

Alon. Oh, Rolla! you distract me!

Rol. Begone! A moment's further pause, and all is lost. The dawn approaches. Fear not for me—I will treat with Pizarro as for surrender and submission. I shall gain time, doubt not, while thou, with a chosen band, passing the secret way, mayst at night return, release thy friend, and bear him back in triumph. Yes, hasten, dear Alonzo! Even now I hear the frantic Cora call thee! Haste! haste! haste!

Alon. Rolla, I fear thy friendship drives me from honour, and from right.

Rol. Did Rolla ever counsel dishonour to his friend?

Alon. Oh! my preserver! [*Embraces him.*

Rol. I feel thy warm tears dropping on my cheek. Go! I am rewarded.—[*Throws the* FRIAR'S *garment over* ALONZO.] There! conceal thy face; and, that they may not clank, hold fast thy chains. Now—God be with thee!

Alon. At night we meet again. Then, so aid me Heaven! I return to save—or—perish with thee! [*Exit.*

Rol. [*Looking after him.*] He has passed the outer porch. He is safe! He will soon embrace his wife and child!—Now, Cora, didst thou not wrong me? This is the first time throughout my life I ever deceived man. Forgive me, God of truth! if I am wrong. Alonzo flatters himself that we shall meet again. Yes—there!—[*Lifting his hands to heaven.*] Assuredly, we shall meet again; there possess in peace the joys of everlasting love and friendship—on earth, imperfect and embittered. I will retire, lest the guard return before Alonzo may have passed their lines. [*Retires into the dungeon.*

Enter ELVIRA.

Elv. No, not Pizarro's brutal taunts, not the glowing admiration which I feel for this noble youth, shall raise an interest in my harassed bosom which honour would not sanction. If he reject the vengeance my heart has sworn against the tyrant, whose death alone can save this land, yet shall the delight be

mine to restore him to his Cora's arms, to his dear child, and to the unoffending people, whom his virtues guide, and valour guards.—Alonzo, come forth!

Re-enter ROLLA.

Ha! who art thou? where is Alonzo?

Rol. Alonzo's fled.

Elv. Fled!

Rol. Yes—and he must not be pursued. Pardon this roughness,—[*Seizing her hand,*] but a moment's precious to Alonzo's flight.

Elv. What if I call the guard?

Rol. Do so—Alonzo still gains time.

Elv. What if thus I free myself? [*Shows a dagger.*

Rol. Strike it to my heart—still, with the convulsive grasp of death, I'll hold thee fast.

Elv. Release me—I give my faith, I neither will alarm the guard, nor cause pursuit.

Rol. At once I trust thy word: a feeling boldness in those eyes assures me that thy soul is noble.

Elv. What is thy name? Speak freely: by my order the guard is removed beyond the outer porch.

Rol. My name is Rolla.

Elv. The Peruvian leader?

Rol. I was so yesterday: to-day, the Spaniards' captive.

Elv. And friendship for Alonzo moved thee to this act?

Rol. Alonzo is my friend; I am prepared to die for him. Yet is the cause a motive stronger far than friendship.

Elv. One only passion else could urge such generous rashness.

Rol. And that is——

Elv. Love!

Rol. True!

Elv. Gallant, ingenuous Rolla! Know that my purpose here was thine; and were I to save thy friend——

Rol. How! a woman blessed with gentleness and courage, and yet not Cora!

Elv. Does Rolla think so meanly of all female hearts?

Rol. Not so—you are worse and better than we are!

Elv. Were I to save thee, Rolla, from the tyrant's vengeance restore thee to thy native land, and thy native land to peace, wouldst thou not rank Elvira with the good?

Rol. To judge the action, I must know the means.

Elv. Take this dagger.

Rol. How to be used?

Elv. I will conduct thee to the tent where fell Pizarro sleeps —the scourge of innocence, the terror of thy race, the fiend that desolates thy afflicted country.

Rol. Have you not been injured by Pizarro?

Elv. Deeply as scorn and insult can infuse their deadly venom.

Rol. And you ask that I shall murder him in his sleep!

Elv. Would he not have murdered Alonzo in his chains? He that sleeps, and he that's bound, are equally defenceless. Hear me, Rolla—so may I prosper in this perilous act, as, searching my full heart, I have put by all rancorous motive of private vengeance there, and feel that I advance to my dread purpose in the cause of human nature and at the call of sacred justice.

Rol. The God of justice sanctifies no evil as a step towards good. Great actions cannot be achieved by wicked means.

Elv. Then, Peruvian, since thou dost feel so coldly for thy country's wrongs, this hand, though it revolt my soul, shall strike the blow.

Rol. Then is thy destruction certain, and for Peru thou perishest! Give me the dagger!

Elv. Now follow me. But first—and dreadful is the hard necessity—thou must strike down the guard.

Rol. The soldier who was on duty here?

Elv. Yes, him—else, seeing thee, the alarm will be instant.

Rol. And I must stab that soldier as I pass? Take back thy dagger.

Elv. Rolla!

Rol. That soldier, mark me, is a man. All are not men that bear the human form. He refused my prayers, refused my gold, denying to admit me, till his own feelings bribed him. For my nation's safety, I would not harm that man!

Elv. Then he must with us—I will answer for his safety.

Rol. Be that plainly understood between us; for, whate'er betide our enterprise, I will not risk a hair of that man's head, to save my heart-strings from consuming fire. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—PIZARRO'S *Tent.*

PIZARRO *is discovered on a couch, in disturbed sleep.*

Piz. [*In his sleep.*] No mercy, traitor!—Now at his heart!—Stand off there, you!—Let me see him bleed!—Ha! ha! ha!—Let me hear that groan again.

Enter ROLLA *and* ELVIRA.

Elv. There! Now, lose not a moment.

Rol. You must leave me now. This scene of blood fits not a woman's presence.

Elv. But a moment's pause may——

Rol. Go, retire to your own tent, and return not here—I will come to you. Be thou not known in this business, I implore you!

Elv. I will withdraw the guard that waits. [*Exit.*

Rol. Now have I in my power the accursed destroyer of my country's peace: yet tranquilly he rests. God! can this man sleep?

Piz. [*In his sleep.*] Away! away! hideous fiends! Tear not my bosom thus!

Rol. No: I was in error—the balm of sweet repose he never more can know. Look here, ambition's fools! ye, by whose inhuman pride the bleeding sacrifice of nations is held as nothing, behold the rest of the guilty!—He is at my mercy—and one blow!—No! my heart and hand refuse the act: Rolla cannot be an assassin! Yet Elvira must be saved!—[*Approaches the couch.*] Pizarro! awake!

Piz. [*Starts up.*] Who?—Guard!——

Rol. Speak not—another word is thy death. Call not for aid! this arm will be swifter than thy guard.

Piz. Who art thou? and what is thy will?

Rol. I am thine enemy! Peruvian Rolla! Thy death is not my will, or I could have slain thee sleeping.

Piz. Speak, what else?

Rol. Now thou art at my mercy, answer me! Did a Peruvian ever yet wrong or injure thee, or any of thy nation? Didst thou, or any of thy nation, ever yet show mercy to a Peruvian in thy power? Now shalt thou feel, and if thou hast a heart thou'lt feel it keenly, a Peruvian's vengeance!—[*Drops the dagger at his feet.*] There!

Piz. Is it possible! [*Walks aside confounded.*

Rol. Can Pizarro be surprised at this? I thought forgiveness of injuries had been the Christian's precept. Thou seest, at least, it is the Peruvian's practice.

Piz. Rolla, thou hast indeed surprised—subdued me.

[*Walks aside again as in irresolute thought.*

Re-enter ELVIRA, *not seeing* PIZARRO.

Elv. Is it done? Is he dead?—[*Sees* PIZARRO.] How! still

living! Then I am lost! And for you, wretched Peruvians! mercy is no more! O Rolla: treacherous, or cowardly?

Piz. How! can it be that——

Rol. Away!—Elvira speaks she knows not what!—[*To* ELVIRA.] Leave me, I conjure you, with Pizarro.

Elv. How! Rolla, dost thou think I shall retract? or that I meanly will deny, that in thy hand I placed a poniard to be plunged into that tyrant's heart? No; my sole regret is, that I trusted to thy weakness, and did not strike the blow myself. Too soon thou'lt learn that mercy to that man is direct cruelty to all thy race!

Piz. Guard! quick! a guard, to seize this frantic woman.

Elv. Yes, a guard! I call them too! And soon I know they'll lead me to my death. But think not, Pizarro, the fury of thy flashing eyes shall awe me for a moment! Nor think that woman's anger, or the feelings of an injured heart, prompted me to this design. No! had I been only influenced so—thus failing, shame and remorse would weigh me down. But, though defeated and destroyed, as now I am, such is the greatness of the cause that urged me, I shall perish, glorying in the attempt, and my last breath of life shall speak the proud avowal of my purpose—to have rescued millions of innocents from the blood-thirsty tyranny of one—by ridding the insulted world of thee.

Rol. Had the act been noble as the motive, Rolla would not have shrunk from its performance.

Enter GUARDS.

Piz. Seize this discovered fiend, who sought to kill your leader.

Elv. Touch me not, at the peril of your souls; I am your prisoner, and will follow you. But thou, their triumphant leader, first shalt hear me. Yet, first—for thee, Rolla, accept my forgiveness; even had I been the victim of thy nobleness of heart, I should have admired thee for it. But 'twas myself provoked my doom,—thou wouldst have shielded me. Let not thy contempt follow me to the grave. Didst thou but know the fiend-like arts by which this hypocrite first undermined the virtue of a guileless heart! how, even in the pious sanctuary wherein I dwelt, by corruption and by fraud he practised upon those in whom I most confided—till my distempered fancy led me, step by step, into the abyss of guilt——

Piz. Why am I not obeyed? Tear her hence!

Elv. 'Tis past—but didst thou know my story, Rolla, thou wouldst pity me.

Rol. From my soul I do pity thee!

Piz. Villains! drag her to the dungeon!—prepare the torture instantly.

Elv. Soldiers, but a moment more—'tis to applaud your general. It is to tell the astonished world that, for once, Pizarro's sentence is an act of justice: yes, rack me with the sharpest tortures that ever agonised the human frame, it will be justice. Yes, bid the minions of thy fury wrench forth the sinews of those arms that have caressed—and even have defended thee! Bid them pour burning metal into the bleeding cases of these eyes, that so oft—oh, God!—have hung with love and homage on thy looks—then approach me bound on the abhorred wheel—there glut thy savage eyes with the convulsive spasms of that dishonoured bosom which was once thy pillow!—yet will I bear it all; for it will be justice, all! and when thou shalt bid them tear me to my death, hoping that thy unshrinking ears may at last be feasted with the music of my cries, I will not utter one shriek or groan; but to the last gasp my body's patience shall deride thy vengeance, as my soul defies thy power.

Piz. Hearest thou the wretch whose hands were even now prepared for murder?

Rol. Yes! and, if her accusation's false, thou wilt not shrink from hearing her; if true, thy barbarity cannot make her suffer the pangs thy conscience will inflict on thee.

Elv. And now, farewell, world!—Rolla, farewell!—farewell, thou condemned of Heaven! [*To* PIZARRO,] for repentance and remorse, I know, wilt never touch thy heart.—We shall meet again.—Ha! be it thy horror here to know that we shall meet hereafter! And when thy parting hour approaches—hark to the knell, whose dreadful beat will strike to thy despairing soul. Then will vibrate on thy ear the curses of the cloistered saint from whom thou stolest me. Then the last shrieks which burst from my mother's breaking heart, as she died, appealing to her God against the seducer of her child! Then the blood-stifled groan of my murdered brother—murdered by thee, fell monster!—seeking atonement for his sister's ruined honour. I hear them now! To me the recollection's madness! At such an hour—what will it be to thee?

Piz. A moment's more delay, and at the peril of your lives—

Elv. I have spoken—and the last mortal frailty of my heart is passed. And now, with an undaunted spirit and unshaken firmness, I go to meet my destiny. That I could not live nobly, has been Pizarro's act; that I will die nobly, shall be my own. [*Exit guarded.*

Piz. Rolla, I would not thou, a warrior, valiant and renowned, shouldst credit the vile tales of this frantic woman. The cause of all this fury—oh! a wanton passion for the rebel youth Alonzo, now my prisoner.

Rol. Alonzo is not now thy prisoner.

Piz. How!

Rol. I came to rescue him—to deceive his guard. I have succeeded; I remain thy prisoner.

Piz. Alonzo fled! Is then the vengeance dearest to my heart never to be gratified?

Rol. Dismiss such passions from thy heart, then thou'lt consult its peace.

Piz. I can face all enemies that dare confront me—I cannot war against my nature.

Rol. Then, Pizarro, ask not to be deemed a hero: to triumph o'er ourselves is the only conquest where fortune makes no claim. In battle, chance may snatch the laurel from thee, or chance may place it on thy brow; but, in a contest with thyself, be resolute, and the virtuous impulse must be the victor.

Piz. Peruvian! thou shalt not find me to thee ungrateful or ungenerous. Return to your countrymen—you are at liberty.

Rol. Thou dost act in this as honour and as duty bid thee.

Piz. I cannot but admire thee, Rolla: I would we might be friends.

Rol. Farewell! pity Elvira! become the friend of virtue—and thou wilt be mine. [*Exit.*

Piz. Ambition! tell me what is the phantom I have followed? where is the one delight which it has made my own? My fame is the mark of envy, my love the dupe of treachery, my glory eclipsed by the boy I taught, my revenge defeated and rebuked by the rude honour of a savage foe, before whose native dignity of soul I have sunk confounded and subdued! I would I could retrace my steps!—I cannot. Would I could evade my own reflections! No! thought and memory are my hell! [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Forest. In the background a hut.*

CORA *is discovered leaning over her* CHILD, *who is laid on a bed of leaves and moss.—A storm, with thunder and lightning.*

Cora. O Nature! thou hast not the strength of love. My anxious spirit is untired in its march; my wearied shivering frame sinks under it. And for thee, my boy, when faint be-

neath thy lovely burden, could I refuse to give thy slumbers that poor bed of rest! Oh my child! were I assured thy father breathes no more, how quickly would I lay me down by thy dear side!—but down—down for ever!—[*Thunder and lightning.*] I ask thee not, unpitying storm! to abate thy rage in mercy to poor Cora's misery; nor while thy thunders spare his slumbers will I disturb my sleeping cherub; though Heaven knows I wish to hear the voice of life, and feel that life is near me. But I will endure all while what I have of reason holds.

[*Sings.*

Yes, yes, be merciless, thou tempest dire;
Unaw'd, unshelter'd, I thy fury brave:
I'll bare my bosom to thy forked fire,
Let it but guide me to Alonzo's grave!

O'er his pale corse then, while thy lightnings glare,
I'll press his clay-cold lips, and perish there.

But thou wilt wake again, my boy,
Again thou'lt rise to life and joy—
Thy father never!—
Thy laughing eyes will meet the light,
Unconscious that eternal night
Veils his for ever.

On yon green bed of moss there lies my child,
Oh! safer lies from these chill'd arms apart;
He sleeps, sweet lamb! nor heeds the tempest wild,
Oh! sweeter sleeps than near this breaking heart.

Alas! my babe, if thou wouldst peaceful rest,
Thy cradle must not be thy mother's breast.
Yet thou wilt wake again, my boy,
Again thou'lt rise to life and joy—
Thy father never!—
Thy laughing eyes will meet the light,
Unconscious that eternal night
Veils his for ever. [*Thunder and lightning.*

Still, still implacable; unfeeling elements! yet still dost thou sleep, my smiling innocent! O Death! when wilt thou grant to this babe's mother such repose? Sure I may shield thee better from the storm; my veil may——

While she is wrapping her mantle and her veil over him, ALONZO'S *voice is heard in the distance.*

Alon. Cora!

Cora. Ha! [*Rises.*

Alon. Cora!

Cora. Oh, my heart! Sweet Heaven, deceive me not! Is it not Alonzo's voice?

Alon. [*Nearer.*] Cora!

Cora. It is—it is Alonzo!
Alon. [*Nearer still.*] Cora! my beloved!
Cora. Alonzo!—Here! here!—Alonzo! [*Runs out.*

Enter two SPANISH SOLDIERS.

1*st Sold.* I tell you we are near our outposts, and the word we heard just now was the countersign.

2*nd Sold.* Well, in our escape from the enemy, to have discovered their secret passage through the rocks, will prove a lucky chance to us. Pizarro will reward us.

1*st Sold.* This way: the sun, though clouded, is on our left. —[*Perceives the* CHILD.] What have we here?—A child, as I'm a soldier!

2*nd Sold.* 'Tis a sweet little babe! Now would it be a great charity to take this infant from its pagan mother's power.

1*st Sold.* It would so: I have one at home shall play with it.—Come along. [*Exeunt with the* CHILD.

Cora. [*Without.*] This way, dear Alonzo!

Re-enter CORA, *with* ALONZO.

Now I am right—there—there—under that tree. Was it possibe the instinct of a mother's heart could mistake the spot? Now wilt thou look at him as he sleeps, or shall I bring him waking, with his full, blue, laughing eyes, to welcome you at once? Yes, yes! Stand thou there; I'll snatch him from his rosy slumber, blushing like the perfumed morn.

She runs up to the spot and finding only the mantle and veil, which she tears from the ground, and the CHILD *gone, shrieks.*

Alon. [*Running to her.*] Cora! my heart's beloved!
Cora. He is gone!
Alon. Eternal God!
Cora. He is gone!—my child! my child!
Alon. Where didst thou leave him?
Cora. [*Dashing herself on the spot.*] Here!
Alon. Be calm, beloved Cora; he has waked and crept to a little distance; we shall find him. Are you assured this was the spot you left him in?
Cora. Did not these hands make that bed and shelter for him? and is not this the veil that covered him?
Alon. Here is a hut yet unobserved.
Cora. Ha! yes, yes! there lives the savage that has robbed me of my child.—[*Beats at the door.*] Give me back my child! restore to me my boy!

Enter LAS-CASAS *from the hut.*

Las-Cas. Who calls me from my wretched solitude?

Cora. Give me back my child!—[*Goes into the hut and calls.*] Fernando!

Alon. Almighty powers! do my eyes deceive me? Las-Casas!

Las-Cas. Alonzo, my beloved young friend!

Alon. My revered instructor! [*Embracing.*

Re-enter CORA.

Cora. Will you embrace this man before he restores my boy?

Alon. Alas, my friend! in what a moment of misery do we meet!

Cora. Yes, his look is goodness and humanity. Good old man, have compassion on a wretched mother, and I will be your servant while I live. But do not—for pity's sake, do not say you have him not; do not say you have not seen him. [*Runs into the wood.*

Las-Cas. What can this mean?

Alon. She is my wife. Just rescued from the Spaniards' prison, I learned she had fled to this wild forest. Hearing my voice, she left the child, and flew to meet me: he was left sleeping under yonder tree.

Re-enter CORA.

Las-Cas. How! did you leave him?

Cora. Oh, you are right! right! unnatural mother that I was! I left my child, I forsook my innocent! But I will fly to the earth's brink, but I will find him. [*Runs out.*

Alon. Forgive me, Las-Casas, I must follow her; for at night I attempt brave Rolla's rescue.

Las-Cas. I will not leave thee, Alonzo. You must try to lead her to the right: that way lies your camp. Wait not my infirm steps: I follow thee, my friend. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Outpost of the Spanish Camp. In the background a torrent, over which a bridge is formed by a felled tree. Trumpets sound without.*

Enter ALMAGRO, *followed by* SOLDIERS, *leading* ROLLA *in chains.*

Alm. Bear him along; his story must be false.

Rol. False! Rolla utter falsehood! I would I had thee in a desert with thy troop around thee, and I but with my sword in this unshackled hand! [*Trumpets without.*

Alm. Is it to be credited, that Rolla, the renowned Peruvian

hero, should be detected, like a spy, skulking through our camp!

Rol. Skulking!

Alm. But answer to the general; he is here.

Enter PIZARRO.

Piz. What do I see? Rolla!

Rol. Oh, to thy surprise, no doubt!

Piz. And bound too!

Rol. So fast, thou needest not fear approaching me.

Alm. The guards surprised him passing our outposts.

Piz. Release him instantly! Believe me, I regret this insult.

Rol. You feel then as you ought.

Piz. Nor can I brook to see a warrior of Rolla's fame disarmed. Accept this, though it has been thy enemy's.—[*Gives a sword.*] The Spaniards know the courtesy that's due to valour.

Rol. And the Peruvians how to forget offence.

Piz. May not Rolla and Pizarro cease to be foes?

Rol. When the sea divides us; yes! May I now depart?

Piz. Freely.

Rol. And shall I not again be intercepted?

Piz. No! Let the word be given that Rolla passes freely.

Enter DAVILLA *and* SOLDIERS, *with* ALONZO'S CHILD.

Dav. Here are two soldiers, captured yesterday, who have escaped from the Peruvian hold—and by the secret way we have so long endeavoured to discover.

Piz. Silence, imprudent! Seest thou not——

[*Pointing to* ROLLA.

Dav. In their way, they found a Peruvian child, who seems——

Piz. What is the imp to me? Bid them toss it into the sea.

Rol. Gracious Heavens! it is Alonzo's child! Give it to me.

Piz. Ha! Alonzo's child!—[*Takes the* CHILD.]—Welcome, thou pretty hostage. Now Alonzo is again my prisoner!

Rol. Thou wilt not keep the infant from its mother?

Piz. Will I not! What, when I shall meet Alonzo in the heat of the victorious fight, thinkest thou I shall not have a check upon the valour of his heart, when he is reminded that a word of mine is this child's death?

Rol. I do not understand thee.

Piz. My vengeance has a long arrear of hate to settle with Alonzo! and this pledge may help to settle the account.

[*Gives the* CHILD *to a* SOLDIER.

Rol. Man! Man! Art thou a man? Couldst thou hurt that innocent?—By Heaven! it's smiling in thy face.

Piz. Tell me, does it resemble Cora?

Rol. Pizarro! thou hast set my heart on fire. If thou dost harm that child, think not his blood will sink into the barren sand. No! faithful to the eager hope that now trembles in this indignant heart, 'twill rise to the common God of nature and humanity, and cry aloud for vengeance on his accursed destroyer's head.

Piz. Be that peril mine.

Rol. [*Throwing himself at his feet.*] Behold me at thy feet—me, Rolla!—me, the preserver of thy life!—me, that have never yet bent or bowed before created man! In humble agony I sue to thee—prostrate I implore thee—but spare that child, and I will be thy slave.

Piz. Rolla; still art thou free to go—this boy remains with me.

Rol. Then was this sword Heaven's gift, not thine!—[*Seizes the* CHILD.] Who moves one step to follow me, dies upon the spot. [*Exit with the* CHILD.

Piz. Pursue him instantly—but spare his life.—*Exeunt* DAVILLA *and* ALMAGRO *with* SOLDIERS.] With what fury he defends himself! Ha! he fells them to the ground—and now——

Re-enter ALMAGRO.

Alm. Three of your brave soldiers are already victims to your command to spare this madman's life; and if he once gain the thicket——

Piz. Spare him no longer.—[*Exit* ALMAGRO.] Their guns must reach him—he'll yet escape—holloa to those horse—the Peruvian sees them—and now he turns among the rocks—then is his retreat cut off.—[ROLLA *crosses the wooden bridge over the cataract, pursued by the* SOLDIERS—*they fire at him—a shot strikes him.*] Now!—quick! quick! seize the child!

[ROLLA *tears from the rock the tree which supports the bridge, and retreats by the background bearing off the* CHILD.

Re-enter ALMAGRO *and* DAVILLA.

Alm. By hell! he has escaped! and with the child unhurt.

Dav. No—he bears his death with him. Believe me, I saw him struck upon the side.

Piz. But the child is saved—Alonzo's child! Oh! the furies of disappointed vengeance!

Alm. Away with the revenge of words—let us to deeds! Forget not we have acquired the knowledge of the secret pass, which through the rocky cavern's gloom brings you at once to the stronghold, where are lodged their women and their treasures.

Piz. Right, Almagro! Swift as thy thought, draw forth a daring and a chosen band—I will not wait for numbers. Stay, Almagro! Valverde is informed Elvira dies to-day.

Alm. He is—and one request alone she—

Piz. I'll hear of none.

Alm. The boon is small—'tis but for the noviciate habit which you first beheld her in—she wishes not to suffer in the gaudy trappings which remind her of her shame.

Piz. Well, do as thou wilt—but tell Valverde, at our return, as his life shall answer it, to let me hear that she is dead.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE III.—ATALIBA'S *Tent.*

Enter ATALIBA, *followed by* CORA *and* ALONZO.

Cora. Oh! avoid me not, Ataliba! To whom but to her king, is the wretched mother to address her griefs? The gods refuse to hear my prayers! Did not my Alonzo fight for thee? and will not my sweet boy, if thou'lt but restore him to me, one day fight thy battles too?

Alon. Oh! my suffering love—my poor heart-broken Cora! —thou but wound'st our sovereign's feeling soul, and not reliev'st thy own.

Cora. Is he our sovereign, and has he not the power to give me back my child?

Ata. When I reward desert, or can relieve my people, I feel what is the real glory of a king—when I hear them suffer, and cannot aid them, I mourn the impotence of all mortal power.

Soldiers. [*Without.*] Rolla! Rolla! Rolla!

Enter ROLLA, *bleeding, with the* CHILD, *followed by* PERUVIAN SOLDIERS.

Rol. Thy child! [*Gives the* CHILD *into* CORA'S *arms, and falls.*

Cora. Oh, God! there's blood upon him!

Rol. 'Tis my blood, Cora!

Alon. Rolla, thou diest!

Rol. For thee, and Cora. [*Dies.*

Enter ORANO.

Ora. Treachery has revealed our asylum in the rocks. Even now the foe assails the peaceful band retired for protection there.

Alon. Lose not a moment! Soldiers, be quick! Your wives and children cry to you. Bear our loved hero's body in the van: 'twill raise the fury of our men to madness. Now, fell Pizarro! the death of one of us is near! Away! Be the word of assault, Revenge and Rolla! [*Exeunt. Charge.*

SCENE IV.—*A Recess among the Rocks.*

Enter PIZARRO, ALMAGRO, VALVERDE, *and* SPANISH SOLDIERS.

Piz. Well! if surrounded, we must perish in the centre of them. Where do Rolla and Alonzo hide their heads?

Enter ALONZO, ORANO, *and* PERUVIAN WARRIORS.

Alon. Alonzo answers thee, and Alonzo's sword shall speak for Rolla.

Piz. Thou knowest the advantage of thy numbers. Thou darest not singly face Pizarro.

Alon. Peruvians, stir not a man! Be this contest only ours.

Piz. Spaniards! observe ye the same.—[*Charge. They fight.* ALONZO's *shield is broken, and he is beat down.*] Now, traitor, to thy heart!

[*At this moment* ELVIRA *enters, habited as when* PIZARRO *first beheld her.* PIZARRO, *appalled, staggers back.* ALONZO *renews the fight and slays him. Loud shouts from the* PERUVIANS.

Enter ATALIBA.

Ata. My brave Alonzo! [*Embraces* ALONZO.

Alm. Alonzo, we submit. Spare us! we will embark, and leave the coast.

Val. Elvira will confess I saved her life; she has saved thine.

Alon. Fear not. You are safe.

[SPANIARDS *lay down their arms.*

Elv. Valverde speaks the truth; nor could he think to meet me here. An awful impulse, which my soul could not resist, impelled me hither.

Alon. Noble Elvira! my preserver! How can I speak what I, Ataliba, and his rescued country, owe to thee! If amid this grateful nation thou wouldst remain——

Elv. Alonzo, no! the destination of my future life is fixed. Humble in penitence, I will endeavour to atone the guilty errors, which, however masked by shallow cheerfulness, have long consumed my secret heart. When, by my sufferings purified and penitence sincere, my soul shall dare address the Throne of Mercy in behalf of others, for thee, Alonzo, for thy Cora, and thy child, for thee, thou virtuous monarch, and the innocent race thou reignest over, shall Elvira's prayers address the God of Nature.—Valverde, you have preserved my life. Cherish humanity, avoid the foul examples thou hast viewed.—Spaniards, returning to your native home, assure your rulers they mistake the road to glory or to power. Tell them that the

pursuits of avarice, conquest, and ambition, never yet made a people happy, or a nation great.

[*Casts a look of agony on the dead body of* PIZARRO *as she passes, and exit. Flourish of trumpets.* VALVERDE, ALMAGRO, *and* SPANISH SOLDIERS, *exeunt, bearing off* PIZARRO'S *body.*

Alon. Ataliba! think not I wish to check the voice of triumph, when I entreat we first may pay the tribute due to our loved Rolla's memory.

[*A solemn march. Procession of* PERUVIAN SOLDIERS, *bearing* ROLLA'S *body on a bier, surrounded by military trophies. The* PRIESTS *and* PRIESTESSES *attending chant a dirge over the bier.* ALONZO *and* CORA *kneel on either side of it, and kiss* ROLLA'S *hands in silent agony. The curtain slowly descends.*

EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY THE HON. WILLIAM LAMB.

SPOKEN BY MRS. JORDAN.

ERE yet suspense has still'd its throbbing fear,
Or melancholy wiped the grateful tear,
While e'en the miseries of a sinking state,
A monarch's danger, and a nation's fate,
Command not now your eyes with grief to flow
Lost in a trembling mother's nearer woe;
What moral lay shall poetry rehearse,
Or how shall elocution pour the verse
So sweetly, that its music shall repay
The loved illusion which it drives away?
Mine is the task, to rigid custom due,
To me ungrateful as 'tis harsh to you,
To mar the work the tragic scene has wrought,
To rouse the mind that broods in pensive thought,
To scare reflection, which, in absent dreams,
Still lingers musing on the recent themes;
Attention, ere with contemplation tired,
To turn from all that pleased, from all that fired;
To weaken lessons strongly now impress'd,
And chill the interest glowing in the breast—
Mine is the task; and be it mine to spare
The souls that pant, the griefs they see, to share;
Let me with no unhallow'd jest deride
The sigh, that sweet compassion owns with pride—

The sigh of comfort, to affliction dear,
That kindness heaves, and virtue loves to hear.
E'en gay Thalia will not now refuse
This gentle homage to her sister-muse.
O ye, who listen to the plaintive strain,
With strange enjoyment, and with rapturous pain,
Who erst have felt the Stranger's lone despair,
And Haller's settled, sad, remorseful care,
Does Rolla's pure affection less excite
The inexpressive anguish of delight?
Do Cora's fears, which beat without control,
With less solicitude engross the soul?
Ah, no! your minds with kindred zeal approve
Maternal feeling, and heroic love.
You must approve: where man exists below,
In temperate climes, or midst drear wastes of snow,
Or where the solar fires incessant flame,
Thy laws, all-powerful Nature, are the same:
Vainly the sophist boasts he can explain
The causes of thy universal reign—
More vainly would his cold presumptuous art
Disprove thy general empire o'er the heart:
A voice proclaims thee, that we must believe—
A voice, that surely speaks not to deceive:
That voice poor Cora heard, and closely press'd
Her darling infant to her fearful breast;
Distracted dared the bloody field to tread,
And sought Alonzo through the heaps of dead,
Eager to catch the music of his breath,
Though faltering in the agonies of death,
To touch his lips, though pale and cold, once more,
And clasp his bosom, though it stream'd with gore:
That voice too Rolla heard, and greatly brave,
His Cora's dearest treasure died to save;
Gave to the hopeless parent's arms her child,
Beheld her transports, and, expiring, smiled.
That voice we hear—oh! be its will obey'd!
'Tis valour's impulse, and 'tis virtue's aid—
It prompts to all benevolence admires,
To all that heavenly piety inspires,
To all that praise repeats through lengthen'd years,
That honour sanctifies, and time reveres.

POEMS.

THE

LOVE EPISTLES OF ARISTÆNETUS.

Translated from the Greek into English Metre.

"——— Love refines
The thoughts, and heart enlarges; hath his seat
In reason, and is judicious."
MILT. Par. Lost, book viii.

PREFACE.

THE critics have not yet decided at what time Aristænetus appeared, or indeed whether or not he ever existed; for, as he is mentioned by no ancient author, it has been conjectured that there never was such a person, and that the name prefixed to the first Epistle was taken by the publisher for that of the writer. This work was never known nor heard of till Sambucus gave it to the world in the year 1566; since which time there have been several editions of it published at Paris, where the book seems to have been held in greater estimation than amongst us. As to the real date of its composition, we have nothing but conjecture to offer. By the twenty-sixth Epistle it should seem that the author lived in the time of the later emperors, when Byzantium was called New Rome: and therein mention is made of the pantomime actor Caramallus, who was contemporary with Sidonius Apollinaris.

These Epistles are certainly terse, elegant, and very poetical, both in language and sentiment; yet, pleasing as they are, they have scarcely anything original in them, being a cento from the writings of Plato, Lucian, Philostratus, and almost all the ancient Greek authors, whose sentences are most agreeably woven together, and applied to every passion incident to love. This circumstance, though it may lessen our idea of the invention of the author, should not in the least depreciate the performance, as it opens to us a new source of entertainment, in contemplating the taste of the composer in the selection of his sentences, and his ingenuity in the application of them, whilst the authority and reputation of the works from whence these sweets are extracted, adds dignity to the subject on which they are bestowed.

Having said thus much of the original, custom seems to demand some apology for the translation. And, first, it may to some appear a whimsical undertaking to give a metrical translation of a prosaic author; but the English reader, it is to be presumed, will not find any deficiency of poetical thoughts on that account, however the diction may have suffered by passing through unworthy hands; and to such as are acquainted with that elegant luxuriance which characterizes the Greek prose, this point will not need a solution. Nor can it be deemed derogatory from the merit of our own language to affirm, that the superiority of the Greek in this respect is so forcible, that even the most trifling of these Epistles must have suffered considerably both in spirit and simplicity, if committed to the languid formality of an English prosaic translation.

The ingenious Tom Brown has translated, or rather imitated, some select pieces from this collection, but he either totally misconceived the spirit of his author, or was very unequal to the execution of it. He presents you, it is true, with a portrait of the author, and a portrait that has some resemblance to him; but it is painted in a bad attitude, and placed in a disadvantageous light. In the original, the language is neat, though energetic; it is elegant as well as witty. Brown has failed in both; and though a strict adherence to these points in a metrical translation may be esteemed difficult, yet it is hoped that the English dress in which Aristænetus is at present offered to the public, will appear to become him more than any he has ever worn in this country.

It were absurd to pretend that this translation is perfectly literal; the very genius of prose and verse forbid it; and the learned reader who shall consult the original, will find many reasons for the impropriety as well as difficulty of following the author's expressions too closely. Some things there were which it were scarce possible to handle in verse, and they are entirely omitted, or paraphrastically imitated; many passages have been softened as indelicate, some suppressed as indecent. But beside these allowable deviations, a still further licence has been taken; for where the subject would admit of it, many new ideas are associated with the original substance, yet so far affecting the author's proper style, that its native simplicity might not be obscured by their introduction. And two or three Epistles there are in this collection which must shelter themselves under the name of Aristænetus, without any other title to his protection than that of adhering to the subject of the several Epistles which they have supplanted. The only

apology which can be offered for this, is an avowal that the object of this translation was not so much to bring to light the merit of an undistinguished and almost unknown ancient, as to endeavour to introduce into our language a species of poetry not frequently attempted, and but very seldom with success; that species which has been called the "simplex munditiis" in writing, where the thoughts are spirited and fanciful without quaintness, and the style simple, yet not inelegant. Though the merit of succeeding in this point should not be given to the present attempt, yet it may in some measure become serviceable to the cause, by inciting others of better taste and abilities to endeavour to redeem our language from the imputation of barbarity in this respect.

As to the many different measures which are here introduced, something besides the translator's caprice may be urged in their favour. For by a variation of metre, the style almost necessarily undergoes an alteration; and in general, the particular strain of each Epistle suggested the particular measure in which it is written. Had they been all in one kind of verse, they would have fatigued, they might have disgusted. At present, it is hoped that some analogy will be found between the mode of passion in each Epistle and the versification by which it is expressed; at the same time that a variety of metres, like a variety of prospects on a road, will conduct the reader with greater satisfaction through the whole stage, though it be short.

There remains but one thing more to be said. The original is divided into two parts; the present essay contains only the first. By its success must the fate of the second be determined.

H. S.*

* Halhed and Sheridan.

EPISTLE I. LAIS.

ARISTÆNETUS TO PHILOCALUS.*

BLEST with a form of heavenly frame,†
Blest with a soul beyond that form,
With more than mortal ought to claim,
With all that can a mortal warm,
Laïs was from her birth design'd
To charm, yet triumph o'er mankind.
There Nature, lavish of her store,
Gave all she could, and wish'd for more;
Whilst Venus gazed, her form was such!
Wondering how Nature gave so much;
Yet added she new charms, for she
Could add—"A fourth bright grace," she said,
"A fourth, beyond the other three,
Shall raise my power in this sweet maid."
Then Cupid, to enhance the prize,
Gave all his little arts could reach:
To dart Love's language from the eyes
He taught—'twas all was left to teach.

O fairest of the virgin band!
Thou master-piece of Nature's hand!
So like the Cyprian queen, I'd swear
Her image fraught with life were there:
But silent all: and silent be,
That you may hear her praise from me:
I'll paint my Laïs' form; nor aid
I ask—for I have seen the maid.

Her cheek with native crimson glows,
But crimson soften'd by the rose:
'Twas Hebe's self bestow'd the hue,
Yet health has added something too:

* There is a studied propriety in the very names of the supposed correspondents in these Epistles; having in the original this peculiar beauty, that generally one, and often both of them, bear an agreeable allusion to the subject of the several letters to which they are prefixed.

† In this letter Aristænetus describes the beauties of his mistress to his friend. This description differs in one circumstance from the usual poetic analysis of beauty, which is this, that (if we except the epithets "ruby," "snowy," &c., which could not well have been avoided) the lady it paints would be really beautiful; whereas it is generally said, "that a negro would be handsome, compared to woman in poetical dress."

But if an over-tinge there be,
Impute it to her modesty.
Her lips of deeper red, how thin!
How nicely white the teeth within!
Her nose how taper to the tip!
And slender as her ruby lip!
Her brows in arches proudly rise,
As conscious of her powerful eyes:
Those eyes, majestic-black, display
The lustre of the god of day;
And by the contrast of the white,
The jetty pupil shines more bright.
There the glad Graces keep their court,
And in the liquid mirror sport.
Her tresses, when no fillets bind,
Wanton luxurious in the wind;
Like Dian's auburn locks they shone,
But Venus wreath'd them like her own.
Her neck, which well with snow might vie,
Is form'd with nicest symmetry;
In native elegance secure
The most obdurate heart to wound;
But she, to make her conquests sure,
With sparkling gems bedecks it round:
With gems that, ranged in order due,
Present the fair one's name to view.*
Her light-spun robes in every part
Are fashioned with the nicest art,
T' improve her stature, and to grace
The polish'd limbs which they embrace.
How beautiful she looks when drest!
But view her freed from this disguise,
Stript of th' unnecessary vest—
'Tis Beauty's self before your eyes.

How stately doth my Laïs go!
With studied step, composedly slow;
Superb, as some tall mountain fir,
Whom Zephyr's wing doth slightly stir:
(For surely beauty is allied
By Nature very near to Pride:)

* *With gems*, &c.] This conceit was formerly reckoned a peculiar elegance in a lady's dress.

The groves indeed mild breezes move,
But her the gentler gales of Love.
From her the pencil learns its dye—
The rosy lip, the sparkling eye;
And bids the pictured form assume
Bright Helen's mien, and Hebe's bloom.
But how shall I describe her breast?
That now first swells with panting throb
To burst the fond embracing vest,
And emulate her snow-white robe.
So exquisitely soft her limbs!
That not a bone but pliant seems;
As if th' embrace of Love—so warm!
Would quite dissolve her beauteous form.
But when she speaks!—good heavens! e'en now
Methinks I hear my fav'rite song;
E'en yet with Love's respect I bow
To all th' enchantment of her tongue.
Her voice most clear, yet 'tis not strong;
Her periods full, though seldom long;
With wit, good-natured wit, endow'd;
Fluent her speech, but never loud.
Witness, ye Loves! witness; for well I know
To her you've oft attention given;
Oft pensile flutter'd on your wings of snow
To waft each dying sound to heaven.
Ah! sure this fair enchantress found
The zone which all the Graces bound:
Not Momus could a blemish find
Or in her person or her mind.—
But why should Beauty's goddess spare
To me this all-accomplish'd fair?
I for her charms did ne'er decide,*
As Paris erst on lofty Ide;
I pleased her not in that dispute;
I gave her not the golden fruit:
Then why the Paphian queen so free?
Why grant the precious boon to me?
Venus! what sacrifice, what prayer
Can show my thanks for such a prize!
—To bless a mortal with a fair,
Whose charms are worthy of the skies.

* *I for her charms did ne'er decide.*] This alludes to the well-known contest between Juno, Venus, and Minerva, for the golden apple.

She too, like Helen, can inspire
Th' unfeeling heart of age with fire;
Can teach their lazy blood to move,
And light again the torch of love.*
"Oh!" cry the old, "that erst such charms
Had bloom'd to bless our youthful arms;
Or that we now were young, to show
How we could love—some years ago!"

Have I not seen th' admiring throng
For hours attending to her song?
Whilst from her eyes such lustre shone,
It added brightness to their own:
Sweet grateful beams of thanks they'd dart,
That showed the feelings of her heart.
Silent we've sat, with rapt'rous gaze!
Silent—but all our thoughts were praise:
Each turned with pleasure to the rest;
And this the prayer that warmed each breast:

"Thus may that lovely bloom for ever glow,
Thus may those eyes for ever shine!
Oh may'st thou never feel the scourge of woe!
Oh never be misfortune thine!
Ne'er may the crazy hand of pining care
Thy mirth and youthful spirits break!
Never come sickness, or love-cross'd despair,
To pluck the roses from thy cheek!
But bliss be thine—the cares which love supplies,
Be all the cares that you shall dread;
The graceful drop, now glist'ning in your eyes,
Be all the tears you ever shed.

But hush'd be now thy am'rous song
And yield a theme, thy praises wrong:
Just to her charms, thou canst not raise
Thy notes—but must I cease to praise?
Yes—I will cease—for she'll inspire
Again the lay, who strung my lyre.

* *She too, like Helen,* &c.]
Οὐ Νέμεσις, Τρῶας καὶ ἐυκνήμιδας Ἀχαιοὺς
Τοιῇ δ' ἀμφὶ γυναικὶ πολὺν χρόνον ἄλγεα πάσχειν.
Αἰνῶς ἀθανάτῃσι θεῇς εἰς ὦπα ἐοικεν. Hom.

Then fresh I'll paint the charming maid,
Content, if she my strain approves;
Again my lyre shall lend its aid,
And dwell upon the theme it loves.

EPISTLE II. THE PLEASING CONSTRAINT.*

In a snug little court as I stood t' other day,
And caroll'd the loitering minutes away;
Came a brace of fair nymphs, with such beautiful faces,
That they yielded in number alone to the Graces:
Disputing they were, and that earnestly too,
When thus they address'd me as nearer they drew:
"So sweet is your voice, and your numbers so sweet,
Such sentiment join'd with such harmony meet;
Each note which you raise finds its way to our hearts,
Where Cupid engraves it wi' the point of his darts:
But oh! by these strains, which so deeply can pierce,
Inform us for whom you intended your verse:
'Tis for her, she affirms—I maintain 'tis for me—
And we often pull caps in asserting our plea."†

"Why, ladies," cried I, "you're both handsome, 'tis true,
But cease your dispute, I love neither of you;
My life on another dear creature depends;
Her I hasten to visit:—so kiss and be friends."
"Oh ho!" said they, "now you convince us quite clear,
For no pretty woman lives anywhere here—
That's plainly a sham. Now, to humour us both,
You shall swear you love neither; so come, take your oath."

I laughing replied, "'Tis tyrannical dealing
To make a man swear, when 'tis plain he's not willing."

"Why, friend, we've long sought thy fair person to seize;
And think you we'll take such excuses as these?
No, 'twas chance brought you hither, and here you shall stay;—
Help, Phædra! to hold, or he'll sure get away."

* This sufficiently explains itself. It has no names prefixed to it in the original, and is very literally translated.

† *And we often pull caps*, &c.] This is almost literally the Greek expression: Καὶ διὰ σὲ φιλονείκως καὶ μίγρι τριχῶν συμπλεκόμεθα πολλάκις ἀλλήλαις.

Thus spoken, to keep me between 'em they tried;
Twas a pleasing constraint, and I gladly complied.
If I struggled, 'twas to make 'em imprison me more,
And strove—but for shackles more tight than before;
But think not I'll tell how the minutes were spent;
You may think what you please—but they both were content.

EPISTLE III. THE GARDEN OF PHYLLION.*

PHILOPLATANUS TO ANTHOCOME.

BLEST was my lot—ah! sure 'twas bliss, my friend,
The day—by heavens! the live-long day to spend
With Love and my Limona! Hence! in vain
Would mimic Fancy bring those scenes again;
In vain delighted memory tries to raise
My doubtful song, and aid my will to praise.
In vain! Nor fancy strikes, nor memory knows,
The little springs from whence those joys arose.
Yet come, coy Fancy, sympathetic maid!
Yes, I will ask, I will implore thy aid:
For I would tell my friend whate'er befell;
Whate'er I saw, whate'er I did, I'll tell.
But what I felt—sweet Venus! there inspire
My lay, or wrap his soul in all thy fire.

Bright rose the morn, and bright remain'd the day;
The mead was spangled with the bloom of May:
We on the bank of a sweet stream were laid,
With blushing rose and lowly violets spread;
Fast by our side a spreading plane-tree grew,
And waved its head, that shone with morning dew.
The bank acclivous rose, and swell'd above—
The frizzled moss a pillow for my love.
Trees with their ripen'd stores, glow'd all around,
The loaded branches bow'd upon the ground;

* This is surely a most elegant descriptive pastoral, and hardly inferior to any of Theocritus. The images are all extremely natural and simple, though the expression is glowing and luxurious: they are selected from a variety of Greek authors, but chiefly from the Phædrus of Plato.—What intersertions there may be, have been before apologized for; but their detection shall be left to the sagacity or inquisition of the reader. The case is the same with the first Epistle, and indeed with most of them.

Sure the fair virgins of Pomona's train
In those glad orchards hold their fertile reign.
The fruit nectareous, and the scented bloom
Wafted on Zephyr's wing their rich perfume;
A leaf I bruised—what grateful scents arose!*
Ye gods! what odours did a leaf disclose.
Aloft each elm slow waved its dusky top,
The willing vine embraced the sturdy prop:
And while we stray'd the ripen'd grape to find,
Around our necks the clasping tendrils twined;
I with a smile would tell th' entangled fair,
I envied e'en the vines a lodging there;
Then twist them off, and sooth with am'rous play
Her breasts, and kiss each rosy mark away.
Cautious Limona trod—her step was slow—
For much she fear'd the skulking fruits below;
Cautious—lest haply she, with slipp'ry tread,
Might tinge her snowy feet with vinous red.
Around with critic glance we view'd the store,
And oft rejected what we'd praised before;
This would my love accept, and this refuse,
For varied plenty puzzled us to choose.
"Here may the bunches tasteless, immature,
Unheeded learn to blush, and swell secure;
In richer garb yon turgid clusters stand,
And glowing purple tempts the plund'ring hand."
"Then reach 'em down," she said, "for you can reach,
And cull, with daintiest hand, the best of each."
Pleased I obey'd, and gave my love—whilst she
Return'd sweet thanks, and pick'd the best for me:
'Twas pleasing sure—yet I refused her suit,
But kiss'd the liberal hand that held the fruit.

Hard by the ever-jovial harvest train
Hail the glad season of Pomona's reign;
With rustic song around her fane they stand,
And lisping children join the choral band:
They busily intent now strive to aid,
Now first they're taught th' hereditary trade:
'Tis theirs to class the fruits in order due,
For pliant rush to search the meadow through:

* *A leaf I bruised*, &c.] Nothing can be more rural, and at the same time more forcible, than this image; where the universal fragrance of the spot is not expatiated on, but marked at once by this simple specimen.

To mark if chance unbruised a wind-fall drop,
Or teach the infant vine to know its prop.
And haply too some aged sire is there,
To check disputes, and give to each his share;
With feeble voice their little work he cheers,
Smiles at their toil, and half forgets his years.
"Here let the pippin, fretted o'er with gold,
In fost'ring straw defy the winter's cold;
The hardier russet here will safely keep,
And dusky rennet with its crimson cheek;
But mind, my boys, the mellow pear to place
In soft enclosure, with divided space;
And mindful most how lies the purple plum,
Nor soil, with heedless touch, its native bloom."

Intent they listen'd to th' instructing lord;
But most intent to glean their own reward.

Now turn, my loved Limona, turn and view
How changed the scene! how elegantly new!
Mark how yon vintager enjoys his toil;
Glows with flush red, and Bacchanalian smile:
His slipp'ry sandals burst the luscious vine,
And splash alternate in the new-born wine.
Not far the lab'ring train, whose care supplies
The trodden press, and bids fresh plenty rise.
The teeming boughs that bend beneath their freight,
One busy peasant eases of the weight;
One climbs to where th' aspiring summits shoot;
Beneath, a hoary sire receives the fruit.

Pleased we admired the jovial bustling throng,
Blest e'en in toil!—but we admired not long.
For calmer joys we left the busy scene,
And sought the thicket and the stream again;
For sacred was the fount, and all the grove
Was hallow'd kept, and dedicate to love.
Soon gentle breezes, freshen'd from the wave,
Our temples fann'd, and whisper'd us to lave.
The stream itself seem'd murm'ring at our feet
Sweet invitation from the noonday heat.
We bathed—and while we swam, so clear it flow'd,
That every limb the crystal mirror show'd.
But my love's bosom oft deceived my eye,
Resembling those fair fruits that glided by;

For when I thought her swelling breast to clasp,*
An apple met my disappointed grasp.
Delightful was the stream itself—I swear,
By those glad nymphs who make the founts their care,
It was delightful:—but more pleasing still,
When sweet Limona sported in the rill:
For her soft blush such sweet reflection gave,
It tinged with rosy hues the pallid wave.
Thus, thus delicious was the murm'ring spring,
Nor less delicious the cool zephyr's wing;
Which mild allay'd the sun's meridian power,
And swept the fragrant scent from every flower;
A scent, that feasted my transported sense,
Like that, Limona's sweet perfumes dispense:
But still, my love, superior thine, I swear—
At least thy partial lover thinks they are.

Near where we sat, full many a gladd'ning sound,
Beside the rustling breeze, was heard around:
The little grasshopper essay'd its song,
As if 'twould emulate the feather'd throng:
Still lisp'd it uniform—yet now and then
It something chirp'd, and skipp'd upon the green.
Aloft the sprightly warblers fill'd the grove;
Sweet native melody! sweet notes of love!
While nightingales their artless strains essay'd,
The air, methought, felt cooler in the glade:
A thousand feather'd throats the chorus join'd,
And held harmonious converse with mankind.

Still in mine eye the sprightly songsters play,
Sport on the wing, or twitter on the spray;
On foot alternate rest their little limbs,
Or cool their pinions in the gliding streams;
Surprise the worm, or sip the brook aloof,
Or watch the spider weave his subtle woof.
We the meantime discoursed in whispers low,
Lest haply speech disturb the rural show.

Listen.—Another pleasure I display,
That help'd delightfully the time away.

* *For when I thought*, &c.] This allusion seems forced: but the ancients had an apple which came from Cydon, a town of Crete, and was called Cydonian, that, from its size and beautiful colour, might be said to resemble a woman's breast: and the allusion is frequent in the old poets. In the eighteenth of these Epistles, too, we meet with the κύδώνιον μῆλον.

From distant vales, where bubbles from its source
A crystal rill, they dug a winding course:
See! through the grove a narrow lake extends,
Crosses each plot, to each plantation bends;
And while the fount in new meanders glides,
The forest brightens with refreshing tides.
Towards us they taught the new-born stream to flow,
Towards us it crept irresolute and slow:
Scarce had the infant current trickled by,*
When lo! a wondrous fleet attracts our eye:
Laden with draughts might greet a monarch's tongue,
The mimic navigation swam along.
Hasten, ye ship-like goblets, down the vale,
Your freight a flagon, and a leaf your sail.†
Oh may no envious rush thy course impede,
Or floating apple stop thy tide-borne speed.
His mildest breath a gentle zephyr gave;
The little vessels trimly stemm'd the wave:
Their precious merchandise to land they bore,
And one by one resign'd the balmy store.
Stretch but a hand, we boarded them, and quaft
With native luxury the temper'd draught.
For where they loaded the nectareous fleet,
The goblet glow'd with too intense a heat;
Cool'd by degrees in these convivial ships,
With nicest taste, it met our thirsty lips.

Thus in delight the flowery path we trod
To Venus sacred, and the rosy god:
Here might we kiss, here Love secure might reig
And revel free, with all his am'rous train.—
And we did kiss, my friend, and Love was there,
And smooth'd the rustic couch that held my fair.
Like a spring-mead with scented blossoms crown'd,‡
Her head with choicest wreaths Limona bound:

* *Scarce had*, &c.] This is an excessively pretty image. The water bailiff dug a small water-course, which came by the feet of these people in the garden; and the stream had scarce passed by them when the servants sent down several drinking vessels in the shape of ships, which held warm liquor so nicely tempered, that the coolness of the water which encompassed it in its passage, was just sufficient to render it palatable when it arrived at the port of destination.

† *Your freight a flagon*, &c.] In the original, this luxurious image is pursued so far, that the very leaf, which is represented as the sail of the vessel, is particularized as of a medicinal nature, capable of preventing any ill effects the wine might produce.

‡ *Like a spring-mead*, &c.] The word λειμων signifies a meadow: and

But Love, sweet Love! his sacred torch so bright
Had fann'd, that, glowing from the rosy light,
A blush (the print of a connubial kiss,
The conscious tattler of consummate bliss)
Still flush'd upon her cheek; and well might show
The choicest wreaths she'd made, how they should glow;
Might every flower with kindred bloom o'erspread,
And tinge the vernal rose with deeper red.
But come, my friend, and share my happy lot:
The bounteous Phyllion owns this blissful spot;
Phyllion, whose gen'rous care to all extends,
And most is blest while he can bless his friends.
Then come, and quickly come; but with thee bring
The nymph, whose praises oft I've heard thee sing—
The blooming Myrtala; she'll not refuse
To tread the solitude her swain shall choose.
Thy sight will all my busy schemes destroy,
I'll dedicate another day to joy,
When social converse shall the scene improve,
And sympathy bestow new charms on love.
Then shall th' accustom'd bank a couch be made;
Once more the nodding plane shall lend its shade;
Once more I'll view Pomona's jovial throng;
Once more the birds shall raise the sprightly song;
Again the little stream be taught to flow;
Again the little fleet its balm bestow;
Again I'll gaze upon Limona's charms,
And sink transported in her quiv'ring arms;
Again my cheek shall glow upon her breast;
Again she'll yield, and I again be blest.

EPISTLE IV. THE EXPERIMENT.*

PHILOCHORUS TO POLYÆNUS.

As Hippias t'other day and I
Walk'd arm and arm, he said,
"That pretty creature dost thou spy,
Who leans upon her maid?

---

the author takes occasion to play upon it, by saying, that Limona crowned herself with these flowers, to look like the meadow in which they grew.

* In this letter a man describes the excellence of his friend in discovering the particular dispositions of the fair sex.

"She's tall, and has a comely shap
And treads well, too, I swear:
Come on—by this good light we'll scrape
Acquaintance with the fair."

"Good God!" cried I, "she is not game,
I'm sure, for you or me:
Do nothing rashly—you're to blame;
She's modest, you may see."

But he, who knew all womankind,
Thus answer'd with a sneer:
"You're quite a novice, friend, I find—
There's nothing modest here.

"A virtuous dame this hour, no doubt
Would choose to walk the streets;
Especially so dizen'd out,
And smile on all she meets.

"Her rings, her bracelets, her perfumes,
Her wanton actions, prove
The character which she assumes,
And that her trade is love.

"See now, she fidgets with her vest—
To settle it, be sure,
And not at all to show her breast,
Nor wishing to allure.

"Her robe tuck'd up with nicest care—
But that's to show she's neat;
And though her legs are half-way bare,
She means to hide her feet.

"But see! she turns to look behind,
And laughs, I'll take my oath:
Come on—I warrant we shall find
The damsel nothing loth."

So up he march'd, and made his bow—
No sooner off his hat,
But, lover-like, he 'gan to vow,
And soon grew intimate.

But first premised the ways were rough—
"Madam, for fear of harm,
I beg"—so cleverly enough
He made her take his arm.

Then—"Fairest, for thy beauty's sake,
Which long has fired my breast,
Permit me to your maid to make
A single short request!

"And yet you know what I'd require,
And wherefore I apply:
Nought unrequited I desire,
But gold the boon shall buy.

"I'll give, my fairest, what you please—
You'll not exact, I'm sure:
Then deign, bright charmer, deign to ease
The torments I endure."

Assent sat smiling in her eyes;
Her lily hand he seized;
Nor feign'd she very great surprise,
Nor look'd so much displeased.

She blush'd a little too, methought,
As though she should refuse—
But women, I've been told, are taught
To blush whene'er they choose.

Hippias was now quite hand in glove,
With Miss, and firmly bent
To take her to the bower of Love,
He whisper'd as he went—

"Well, Phil, say now whose judgment's best?
Was I so very wrong?
You saw, not eagerly I press'd,
Nor did I press her long.

"But you are ignorant, I see,
So follow, and improve,
For few, I ween, can teach like me
The mysteries of Love."

EPISTLE V. THE EXPEDIENT.*

ALCIPHRON TO LUCIAN.

T'OTHER day Charidemus a feast did prepare,
And with all his acquaintances fill'd up the room:

* The writer here describes an ingenious device practised by a lady of gallantry to deceive a suspicious husband.

'Mong the rest, (for you know his tendresse for the fair,)
Another man's wife he persuaded to come.

The guests were all seated, when in comes our spark,
Introducing to table a musty old dad,
Whom as soon as the lady had time to remark,
To another apartment she scuttled like mad.

"Charidemus," said she, "do you know what you've done?
That old fellow's my husband just now you brought in:
I shall here be discover'd, as sure as a gun,
By the cloak I pull'd off, and which hangs on a pin.

"But if you can assist me, and privately send
That cloak to my house, with a dish of your meat,
I've a trick that shall quickly his jealousy end;
His suspicions I'll 'scape, and his vigilance cheat."

Away then she slipt, and got quick to her house,
Then sent for a gossip, her help to implore;
And they'd scarce fix'd their plan the old cuckold to chouse,
When blust'ring and swearing he came to the door.

He cried, while he sought for his poignard to stab her,
"No more shall you shame me;—your cloak show'd your pranks."—
But while he was storming thus, in pops her neighbour,
The cloak to return to its owner with thanks.

"I'm come to acknowledge your favour," she said,
"And some prog from the feast have I brought with me here:
I knew that at home all the ev'ning you stay'd,
So was willing to give you a taste of our cheer."

The silly curmudgeon grew meek as a lamb,
On hearing this story, and seeing the meat;
For pardon he sued from his retrograde dame,
And bow'd with contrition quite down to her feet.

He vow'd that he ne'er would suspect her again,
If now she'd accept his most humble submission;
And swore Dian herself sent the old woman in,
To show him the folly of groundless suspicion.

EPISTLE VI. THE CONSOLATION.*

HERMOCRATES TO EUPHORION.†

Says a girl to her nurse, "I've a tale to unfold,
Of utmost concern to us both;
But first you must swear not to blab when you're told."
—Nurse greedily swallow'd the oath.

"I've lost, my dear mother," the innocent said,
"What should be a virgin's chief pride."—
I wish you had seen what a face the dame made,
And heard how she blubber'd and cried.

"Hush, for God's sake," says Miss, in a whispering tone,
"The people will hear you within;
You have sworn to discover my secret to none,
Then why such a horrible din?

"My virtue long all opposition withstood,
And scorn'd at Love's efforts to flinch;
It retreated at last—but as slow as it could,
Disputing the ground inch by inch.

"In vain to my aid did I reason invoke;
Young Cupid no reason could quell;
He'd got root in my heart, and there grew like an oak,
So I fell—but reluctantly fell.

"Yet surely young Lysias has charms to betray;
Too charming, alas, to be true!
But you never heard the soft things he can say—
Ah! would I had ne'er heard them too:

"For now that the spoiler has robb'd me of all
My innocent heart used to prize,
He cruelly mocks at my tears as they fall—
The tears he has drawn from my eyes."

"You've play'd a sad game," cries the matron, aghast;
"Besides, you disgrace my gray head:
But since no reflections can alter what's past,
Cheer up—there's no more to be said.

* This Epistle describes the distress of a girl who has been debauched, with the consolation of the good old woman her nurse.

† The subject of this Epistle does not in the least regard the writer; who, as in the preceding one, only entertains his correspondent with a little tale, or amusing description. The case is the same with many of the subsequent ones.

"Cheer up, child, I say; why there's no such great crime;
Sure I too have met with false men:
I've known what it was to be trick'd in my time;
But I know too—to trick them again.

"But do so no more; lest, should you be rash,
Your apron-strings publish your tricks:
Your father, I hope, has a round sum of cash,
And soon on your husband will fix.

"Some innocent swain, (if such innocence be!)
Unskill'd in the myst'ries of love;
Whose gallantry ne'er went 'yond Phyllis's knee,
Or fast'ning the garter above.

"My humble petition may Jupiter hear,
And grant that you quickly may wed."—
"So at present, dear mother, I've nothing to fear
No tale-telling urchin to dread?"—

"You're safe, my dear daughter, I fancy, as yet;
And when at the altar you're tied,
I'll teach you a method your husband to cheat,
For a virgin, as well as a bride."

EPISTLE VII.* THE DISAPPOINTMENT.

CYRTION TO DICTYS.

LATE as upon the rocky strand
Alone the death-barb'd bait I threw,
Just as I tow'd a fish to land,
Which almost broke my line in two—

Comes a fair maid, whose native bloom
The tinct of art excell'd as far,
As the wild fruits of Nature's womb
Beyond the hotbed's produce are.

This prize is better than my fish,
Thought I—'tis sure a lucky day.—
"I want to bathe, sir, and I wish
You'd watch my clothes while I'm away."

* *Epistle VII.*] A disagreeable end to a pleasing rencontre.

"Yes, yes," I eagerly replied,
In hopes her naked charms to spy,
"I'll watch your clothes, and by their side
My faithful little dog shall lie."

She bow'd, and doff'd her mantle blue;
Good heavens! what beauties struck my sight!
Thus morn's sweet ruddy skies I view,
Fresh from the midst of lagging night.

Bright polish'd arms, a neck of snow,
Through locks of lovely jet were seen;
Which by their blackness seem'd to throw
An added lustre on her skin.

Two rising globules at her breast,
Whose swelling throb was such,
They seem'd upheaving to be prest,
And sued impatient for the touch.

The wind was hush'd, the sea was calm,
And in she leap'd, and plough'd the tide
The froth that bubbled as she swam,
Lost all its whiteness by her side.

But soon the wave's impetuous gush
Dash'd o'er her form a crimson hue;
She blush'd—you've seen the rosebud blush
Beneath its morning coat of dew.

Askance she view'd the watery space,
Her neck averted from the tide,
As if old Ocean's cold embrace
Would shock her modest virgin-pride.

Each pressing wave, that seem'd to try
With am'rous haste her limbs to kiss,
With coy rebuke she patted by;
Rebuked—but never could dismiss.

Still as she stemm'd her liquid way,
Thought I, a Nereid 'tis that laves:
And when she tired, and left her play,
'Twas Venus rising from the waves.

Then from her oozy bed she sprung,
And shiv'ring on the bank reclined,

The while her dripping locks she wrung,
And spread them to the fanning wind.

Quick to present her clothes I rush,
And towards her stretch my longing arms.
But she repulsed me with a blush—
A blush that added to her charms.

Rage would have sparkled in her eyes;
Yet still they twinkled lovely sweet:
As suns in farthest distant skies
Emit their light without their heat.

Her robe she snatch'd, and round her waist
The azure mantle instant threw.—
"I'm sorry, sir, I'm in such haste;
I thank you—but must bid adieu."

I gently press'd her hand;—she frown'd;
Yet took she not her hand away:
I kiss'd her hand—she turn'd around
To hide what conscious smiles betray.

At length she broke my rod and net;
Into the sea my capture toss'd:
Then left me vainly to regret
The fish I'd caught, and her I lost.

EPISTLE VIII. FROM THE GROOM OF A KNIGHT IN LOVE.*

ECHEPOLUS TO MELESIPPUS.

"Oh! the grace, the art to rein
Fiery coursers round the plain!
See yon valiant hero ride,
Skill'd with either hand to guide:
See how beautiful and strong!
See how swift he glides away!
Sure fell Cupid's arrowy storm
Ne'er assail'd that blooming form.

* This is an odd subject.—While a gentleman was riding on horse-back his groom, struck with his beauty, was exclaiming that sure so glorious a form could never have been in love. This the master overhears, and informs his groom to the contrary; who writes an account of the transaction to his friend.

No—'tis sure Adonis fair,
All the nymphs' peculiar care."
Speaking thus, the cavalier
Chanced my words to overhear.—
"Hush," said he, "thy words are vain:
Love alone can guide the rein.
Love impels, through me, the steed,
Nerves my arm, and fires my speed:
Quick as lightning though we run,
Still dread Cupid urges on.
Mount yon car, begin thy strain;
Songs best suit the lover's pain."
I submitted—and from him
Took at once the sudden theme.
"Little reck'd I, hapless lord,
Cupid's shaft thy heart had gored:
If so fair a form as thine
Can with hopeless passion pine,
By the Cyprian queen I swear,
All the Loves fell tyrants are.
Yet be't thine to brave the smart,
Boldly bear the tingling dart:—
Well might they disturb your rest,
Who could pierce their mother's breast."*

EPISTLE IX.† THE SLIP.

STESICHORUS TO ERATOSTHENES.

A LADY walking in the street
Her lover lately chanced to meet:
But dared not speak when he came nigh,
Nor make a sign, nor wink her eye,
Lest watchful spouse should see or hear:
And servants too were in the rear.
A plea she sought to stop his walk,
To touch his hand, to hear him talk:
A plea she sought, nor sought in vain;
A lucky scheme inspired her brain.

* *Who could pierce*, &c.] "Et majores tuos irreverenter pulsasti, toties, et ipsam matrem tuam, me inquam ipsam, parricida, denudas quotidie." APOL. MIL. v.

† *Epistle IX.* contains the stratagem of a lady who wanted to speak to her lover in the presence of her husband and servants.

Just as they met, she feign'd to trip,
And sprain her ankle in the slip.
The lover, ready at his cue,
Suspected what she had in view;
And as he pass'd at little distance,
Officious ran to her assistance.
Contrived her slender waist to seize,
And catch her snowy hand in his.
With unexpected raptures fill'd,
Through all their veins love instant thrill'd:
Their limbs were palsied with delight,
Which seem'd the trembling caused by fright.
Feigning condolence, he drew near,
And spoke his passion in her ear;
While she, to act the real strain,
Affects to writhe and twist with pain:
A well-concerted plan to kiss
The hand her lover touched with his:
Then, looking amorously sly,
She put it to her jetty eye;
But rubb'd in vain to force a tear
Might seem the genuine fruits of fear.

EPISTLE X.* ACONTIUS AND CYDIPPE.

ERATOCLEA TO DIONYSIS.

Long buffeted by adverse fate,
The victim of Diana's hate,
At last the blest Acontius led
Cydippe to the bridal bed.
Ne'er had been form'd by Nature's care
So lovely, so complete a pair.
And truth to that belief gave rise,†
That similarities so nice,
By destiny's impulsive act
Each other mutually attract.

* *Epistle X.*] This is an epistolary narration of the loves of Acontius and Cydippe.—Acontius was a youth of the isle of Cea, who going to Delos during the solemnities of Diana, fell in love with Cydippe; and being inferior to her in wealth and rank, he there practised the deceit which is the subject of this Epistle. We find the story in Ovid.

† *And truth*, &c.]—ὁμοίον ἀγει θεὸς ὡς τὸν ὁμοίον.

On fair Cydippe Beauty's queen
Had lavish'd all her magazine:
From all her charms the magic cest*
Reserved, and freely gave the rest:
That cest, not fit for mortal bodies,
Her own prerogative as goddess;
And but for which distinction, no man
Could know th' immortal from the woman.
In three, like Hesiod, to comprise
The graces sparkling in her eyes,
Were idle; since to count them all,
A thousand were a sum too small.
Nor were his eyes devoid of light,
Bold and yet modest, sweet though bright:
Whilst health and glowing vigour spread
His downy cheek with native red.
Numbers from every quarter ran,
To see this master-piece of man:
Crowds at the Forum might you meet,
—And if he did but cross the street,
Th' applauding train his steps pursued,
And praised and wonder'd as they view'd.
Such was th' accomplish'd youth, whose breast
The fair Cydippe robb'd of rest.
And 'twas but justice that the swain
For whom so many sigh'd in vain,
Should feel how exquisite the smart
That rankles in a lover's heart.—
So Cupid, throwing to the ground
His shafts that tickle while they wound,
Aim'd at the youth with all his strength
An arrow of a wondrous length:
His aim, alas! was all too true;
Quick to its goal the weapon flew.—
But when Acontius felt the blow,
What language can express his woe?
The fair one's heart he vow'd to move,†
Or end at once his life and love.

* *From all her charms*, &c.] Homer tells us of this magic girdle belonging to Venus, which made the person who wore it the object of universal love, and which Juno once borrowed to deceive Jupiter.

† *The fair one's heart*, &c.]

Aut ego sigæos repetam te conjuge portus,
Aut ego Tænariâ contegar exul humô. OVID.

While he who shot so keen a dart,
The god of stratagem and art,
Awed haply by his graceful mien,
Fraught him with wiles the fair to win.
Thus while at Dian's hallow'd fane
Cydippe join'd the maiden train,
Towards her attendant's feet he roll'd
(Inscribed with characters of gold)
An apple of Cydonian stem:
(Love's garden raised the budding gem.)
The girl immediate seized the prize,
Admired its colour and its size:
Much wond'ring from what virgin's zone
So fair a pris'ner could have flown.
"'Tis sure," said she, "a fruit divine;
But then, what means this mystic line?
Cydippe, see, just now I found
This apple; view how large, how round:
See how it shames the rose's bloom,
And smell its exquisite perfume.
And, dearest mistress, tell me, pray,
The meaning which these words convey?"
The blushing fruit Cydippe eyed,
Then read th' inscription on its side.—
"By chaste Diana's sacred head,
I swear I will Acontius wed."
Thus vowed she at the hallow'd shrine,
Though rashly, though without design;
And utter'd not, for modest dread,
The last emphatic word, to wed:
Which but to hear, much more to speak,*
With blushes paints a virgin's cheek.
"Ah!" cries the half-distracted fair,
"Diana sure has heard me swear:
Yes, favour'd youth, without dispute
She has assented to thy suit."

He the meanwhile from day to day
In ceaseless anguish pined away.
His tears usurp'd the place of sleep
For shame forbade all day to weep.

* *Which but to hear*, &c.]
Nomine conjugii dicto, confusa pudore
Sensi me totis erubuisse genis. OVID.

Sickly and thin his body grew:
His cheeks had lost their ruddy hue.
Thousand pretences would he feign,
To loiter on the lonely plain;
Striving most eagerly to fly
The keenness of his father's eye.
Oft with the morn's first beam he'd leave
His tear-bathed couch; and to deceive
His friend's concern, some untouch'd book,
As studious bent, the lover took:
Then to the grove, the peaceful grove,
Where silence yields full scope to love.
Thus from their hard attention freed.
He wept unsought, yet seem'd to read.
Thither if chance his father drew,
And bared the wand'rer to his view,
Knowledge he thought the stripling's aim,
A laudable desire for fame;
And every sigh his sorrow brought,
The old man construed into thought;
Or if he wept—as tears would flow—
He only wept at others' woe.

Still too, when pleasant evening came,
And others sought the frolic game,
Still was his wont to shun the feast,
To feign that angling pleased him best;
Then busy with his rod and hook,
He sought some solitary brook.
But ye were safe, ye finny brood,
And safely stemm'd your native flood,
Secure around his float to glide,
And dash th' unbaited hook aside.

Yet still 'twas solitude! and he
Must give his solitude a plea:
Besides, the posture pleased, for grief
In humblest postures finds relief:
True love the suppliant's bend will please,
And sorrow unrestrain'd is ease.
His friends, who found he fled the town,
Concluded him a farmer grown;
And call'd him, in derision pleasant,
Laertes, or the new-made peasant.—

But he, sad lover, little made
The vines his care, or plied the spade;
Little he cared how sped the bower,
And little mark'd the drooping flower,
But wand'ring through the bushy brake,
Thus in bewilder'd accents spake:
"Oh! that each pine, and spreading beech,
Were blest with reason and with speech!
So might they evermore declare
Cydippe fairest of the fair.
At least, ye thickets, will I mark
Her lovely name upon your bark.
O dear inspirer of my pain,
Let not thy oath be sworn in vain:
Let not the goddess find that thou
Hast dared to falsify a vow.
With vengeance every crime she threats,
But never perjury forgets.—
Yet, not on thee the fatal meed;
'Tis I, who caused thy crime, should bleed.
On me then, Dian, vent thine ire,
And let her crime with me expire.
But tell me, lofty groves, oh tell,
Ye seats where feather'd warblers dwell,
Can Love your knotty bosoms reach,
And burns the cypress for the beech?
Ah no—ye never feel the smart;
Ne'er Cupid pierced that stubborn heart.
Think ye your worthless leaves, ye trees,
His mighty anger could appease?
No—silly woods; his ample fire
Above your branches would aspire;
Upon the very trunk would prey,
And burn your hardest root away."

Meantime, a happier lover's arms
Prepared to clasp Cydippe's charms.
Already had the virgin throng
Attuned their Hymeneal song—
"Strike ye now the golden lyre,
Modulate the vocal choir"—
But hark!—what horrid shrieks arise?
Cydippe faints—Cydippe dies.

The bridal pomp, alas! is fled;
Funereal sounds are heard instead.
Yet soft—she lives—she breathes again,
"Louder raise the nuptial strain."
A second time the fever burns:
A second time her health returns.
Again the marriage torches blaze;
Again Cydippe's bloom decays.
No longer will her sire await
The fourth avenging stroke of Fate;
But of the Pythian shrine demands,
What god opposed the nuptial bands?
Phœbus at once revealed the truth,
The vow, the apple, and the youth.—
Told him, her oath the maid must keep,
Or ne'er would Dian's vengeance sleep.
Then added thus the god, "Whene'er
Acontius gains the blooming fair,
Not silver shall be join'd with lead,
But gold the purest gold shall wed."
So spoke the shrine divinely skill'd—
Cydippe soon her vow fulfilled:
No clouds of sickness intervene
To darken the delightful scene.—
Whilst striking with directive hand,
A virgin led the choral band;
Attentive to each warbling throat,
She chided each discordant note.
Others their hands applausive beat,
Like cymbals sounding as they meet.

But ill Acontius brook'd their noise—
He sigh'd for more substantial joys.
Ne'er had he seen so long a day:
Night never pass'd so quick away.
The sun had gain'd its summit, ere
Acontius left the rifled fair:
But first her cheeks he kiss'd, whilst she
Dissembled sleep through modesty;—
But well her tell-tale blushes spake
The conscious nymph was still awake.
Alone at length, she raised her head,
And blushing view'd the bridal bed;
Then with chaste rapture, hanging o'er
The place Acontius press'd before,

"Protect, ye powers divine," she said,
"Protect the wife, who led the maid;
And oh! be doubly kind to him
Who must be now Cydippe's theme.
And thou, chaste Hymen, who dost guide
The steps of each untainted bride,
Teach me what fits I should be taught,
Nor let me wander e'en in thought.
So may your altars ever burn,
So may each day like this return;
And every night."—Speak, trifler, speak;
Whence virgin blushes on thy cheek?—
"And every night"—she hung her head—
Be crown'd like this,—she would have said.

EPISTLE XI.* THE ARTFUL MAID.

PHILOSTRATUS TO EUAGORAS.

A LADY thus her maid address'd—
"Like you the beauteous youth
On whom I dote, in whom I'm blest?
I charge you tell me truth.

"Or is't my love that paints him fair,
And all my fancy warms?
For lovers oft deceived are,
And prize ideal charms.

"But say, the swain whom I admire,
Do other women praise?
Do they behold him with desire,
Or view with scornful gaze?"

The girl replied, who saw her cue,
Deep learn'd in flattery's lore,
"They all his beauty praise with you,
With you they all adore.

"'Behold,' they cry, 'that form divine
The sculptor's art should trace,
To bid the bust of Hermes shine†
With every manly grace.'

* *Epistle XI.*] A lady inquires whether the man she loved was really beautiful: her maid flatters, and assures her of it.

† *To bid the bust*, &c.] The ancient sculptors used to copy the face of Hermes, or Mercury, from that of Alcibiades, who was reckoned the most beautiful model: "but now," says the maid, "women think your lover superior to him."

"I've heard them praise his arched nose,
And praise his auburn air,
That spreading o'er his forehead grows,
To make his face more fair.

"I've heard them praise his stature high,
And praise his manly sense;
I've heard them praise!—and sure, thought I,
'Tis Love gives eloquence.

"His very dress has merit too,
Where taste with art agrees:
For though it is not always new,
It never fails to please.—

"'Blest,' will they say, 'thrice blest the fair
For whom his heart shall burn:*
Who shall a mutual ardour share,
And all his love return.

"'On her the Graces sure have smiled
With most propitious eye.'
Thus the whole sex with passion wild
For the same object sigh."

But while the crafty maid arranged
His charms in fairest light,
Full oft the lady's colour changed
With raptures exquisite.

Convinced his grace was not ideal,
Which all her sex could fire,
For women know that beauty real,
When all who see, admire.

EPISTLE XII.† THE ENRAPTURED LOVER.

EUHEMERUS TO LEUCIPPUS.

HITHER, ye travellers, who've known
The beauties of the Eastern zone,
Or those who sparkle in the West:

* *Blest*, &c.] Ergo mecastor, pulcher est, inquit mihi,
Et liberalis. Vide cæsaries quam decet:
Ne illæ sunt fortunatæ quæ cum illo, &c.
PLAUTUS MILITE.

† *Epistle XII.*] A lover here summons all the judges of beauty to decide in favour of his mistress. The libertine digression with which it concludes must be morally interpreted, as meant to show into what extravagance a man may be led by an attachment whose foundation is in vice.

Hither—oh tell, and truly tell,
That few can equal, none excel,
The fair who captivates my breast.

Survey her in whatever light—
New beauties still engage your sight:
Nor does a single fault appear.
Momus might search, and search again,
But all his searches would be vain,
To find occasion for a sneer.

Her height, her shape—'tis all complete;
And e'en remarkable her feet
For taper size, genteelly slim.—
And little feet, each lover knows,
Impart a striking charm to those
Who boast no other graceful limb.

But not her beauties only strike—
Her pleasing manners too I like:
From these new strength my passion gains.
For though her chastity be gone,
She deals deceitfully by none;
And still some modesty remains.

And still may Pythias make pretence
To something much like innocence,
Which forges all my chains to last:
Whate'er you give, she turns to praise;
Unlike the harlot's odious ways,
Who sneers at presents e'er so vast.

We, like two thrushes on a spray,
Together sit, together play;—
But telling would our pleasures wrong.—
Suffice it, Pythias will oppose
My wanton passion, till it grows
By opposition doubly strong.*

Her neck ambrosial sweets exhales;
Her kisses, like Arabian gales,
The scent of musky flowers impart.
And I, reclining on her breast,
In slumbers, happy slumbers, rest,
Rock'd by the beating of her heart!

* *Suffice it*, &c.]
Quæ cum ita pugnaret tanquam quæ vincere nollet,
Victa est non ægre prælitione sua. OVID.

Oft have I heard the vulgar say,
That absence makes our love decay,
  And friends are friends but while in view;
But absence kindles my desire;
It adds fresh fuel to the fire
  Which keeps my heart for ever true.

And oh! may faith my thanks receive,
In that it forced me not to leave
  The fair in whom my soul is placed.
With truth my case did Homer write;*
For every time with new delight
  My oft-repeated joys I taste.

Sure this is joy—true native joy
Which malice never can destroy,
  Nor holy shackled fools receive.
Free joys! which from ourselves must flow,
Such as free souls alone can know,
  And unchain'd Love alone can give.

But say, ye prudes! ye worthless tribe!
Who swear no gifts could ever bribe
  Your hearts sweet virtue to forsake—
What is this treasure which ye boast?
Ye vaunt because you have not lost
  —What none had charity to take.

Myrina carries on her back
An antidote to Love's attack;
  Yet still at Pythias will she sneer.
And as my love is passing by,
Chrysis distorts her single eye,
  With looks of scorn and virtuous fear.

Philinna scoffs at Pythias too,
—Yet she is handsome, it is true;
  But then her heart's a heart of steel:
Incapable of all desire,
She ridicules Love's sacred fire,
  And mocks the joys she cannot feel.

Yet this is virtue! woman's pride!
From which if once she step aside,
  Her peace, her fame's for ever gone!

* *With truth*, &c.]
Ἀσπάσιον λέκτροιο παλαιοῦ θεσμὸν ἵκοντο. HOM. IL. V

—Away; 'tis impious satire says,
That woman's good, and woman's praise,
Consist in chastity alone.

Can one short hour of native joy
Nature's inherent good destroy?
And pluck all feeling from within?
Shall shame ne'er strike the base deceiver,
But follow still the poor believer,
And make all confidence a sin?

Did gentle Pity never move
The heart once led astray by Love?
Was Poverty ne'er made its care?
Did Gratitude ne'er warm the breast
Where guilty joy was held a guest?
Was Charity ne'er harbour'd there?

Does coy Sincerity disclaim
The neighb'rhood of a lawless flame?
Does Truth with fame and fortune fall?
Does every tim'rous virtue fly
With that cold thing, call'd Chastity?
—And has my Pythias lost them all?

No! no!—In thee, my life, my soul,
I swear I can comprise the whole
Of all that's good as well as fair:
And though thou'st lost what fools call fame,
Though branded with a harlot's name,
To me thou shalt be double dear.

Then whence these fetters for desire?
Who made these laws for Cupid's fire?
Why is their rigour so uncommon?
Why is this honour-giving plan
So much extoll'd by tyrant man,
Yet binding only to poor woman?

Search not in Nature for the cause;
Nature disclaims such partial laws;
'Tis all a creature of th' imagination:
By frozen prudes invented first,
Or hags with ugliness accurst—
A phantom of our own creation!

Two classes thus, my Pythias, show
Their insolence to scoff at you:
First, they who've passions given by Nature,

But as the task of fame is hard,
They've blest Deformity to guard
Grim virtue in each rugged feature.

And second, they who neither know
What passion means, nor love can do;
Yet still for abstinence they preach;
Whilst Envy, rankling in the breast,
Inflames them, seeing others blest,
To curse the joys they cannot reach.

Not but there are—though but a few!
With charms, with love—and virtue too:
But malice never comes from them!
With charity they judge of all,
They weep to see a woman fall,
And pity where they most condemn.

If, Pythias, then, thou'st done amiss,
This is thy crime, and only this:
That Nature gave thee charms to move,
Gave thee a heart to joy inclined,
Gave thee a sympathetic mind,
And gave a soul attuned to love.

When Malice scoffs, then, Pythias, why
Glistens abash'd thy tearful eye?
Why glows thy cheek that should be gay?
For though from shame thy sorrows gush,
Though conscious guilt imprints the blush,
By heavens, thou'rt modester than they.

But let them scoff, and let them sneer—
I heed them not, my love, I swear:
Nor shall they triumph in thy fall.
I'll kiss away each tear of woe,
Hid by my breast thy cheek shall glow,
And Love shall make amends for all.

EPISTLE XIII.* THE SAGACIOUS DOCTOR.

EUTYCHOBULUS TO ACESTODORUS.

FORTUNE, my friend, I've often thought,
Is weak, if Art assist her not:

* *Epistle XIII.*] This is the story of Antiochus and Seleucus; but related in Aristænetus under different names. Seleucus was one of Alexander's successors in Asia, having Syria for his kingdom: he married Stratonice, daughter to Demetrius, having had, by a former marriage, a son named Antiochus. Stratonice was the most beautiful and accomplished

So equally all Arts are vain,
If Fortune help them not again:
They've little lustre of their own,
If separate, and view'd alone;
But when together they unite,
They lend each other mutual light.—
But since all symphony seems long
To those impatient for the song,
And lest my apophthegms should fail,
I'll haste to enter on my tale.

Once on a time, (for time has been,
When men thought neither shame nor sin,
To keep, beside their lawful spouses,
A buxom filly in their houses,)
Once on a time then, as I said,
A hopeful youth, well-born, well-bred,
Seized by a flame he could not hinder,
Was scorch'd and roasted to a cinder.
For why the cause of all his pain
Was that he fear'd all hope was vain:
—In short, the youth must needs adore
The nymph his father loved before.
"His father's mistress?"—even so,
And sure 'twas cause enough for woe.
In mere despair he kept his bed,
But feign'd some illness in its stead.
His father, grieved at his condition,
Sends post for an expert physician.
The doctor comes—consults his pulse—
No feverish quickness—no convulse;
Observes his looks, his skin, his eye—
No symptoms there of malady;
—At least of none within the knowledge
Of all the pharmaceutic college.
Long did our Galen wond'ring stand,
Reflecting on the case in hand.—
Thus as he paused, came by the fair,
The cause of all his patient's care.—

princess of her time; and unhappily inspired her son-in-law with the most ardent passion. He fell sick, and Seleucus was in the greatest despair, when Erasistratus, one of his physicians, discovered the cause of the prince's malady, and, by his address, prevailed on the king to save his son's life, by resigning to him his wife, though he passionately loved her.

Then his pulse beat quick and high;
Glow'd his cheek, and roll'd his eye.
Alike his face and arm confest
The conflict lab'ring in his breast.
Thus chance reveal'd the hidden smart,
That baffled all the search of art.
Still paused the doctor to proclaim
The luckily-discover'd flame:
But made a second inquisition,
To satisfy his new suspicion.
From all the chambers, every woman,
Wives, maids, and widows, did he summon;
And one by one he had them led
In order by the patient's bed.
He the meanwhile stood watchful nigh,
And felt his pulse, and mark'd his eye;
(For by the pulse physicians find
The hidden motions of the mind;)
While other girls walk'd by attractive,
The lover's art'ry lay inactive;
But when his charmer pass'd along,
His pulse beat doubly quick and strong.
Now all the malady appear'd;
Now all the doctor's doubts were clear'd;
Who feign'd occasion to depart,
To mix his drugs, consult his art:
He bid the father hope the best,
The lover set his heart at rest,
Then took his fee and went away,
But promised to return next day.
Day came—the family environ
With anxious eagerness our Chiron.
But he repulsed them rough, and cried,
"Ne'er can my remedy be tried."
The father humbly question'd, why
They might not use the remedy?
Th' enraged physican nought would say,
But earnest seem'd to haste away.
Th' afflicted sire more humble yet is,
Doubles his offers, prayers, entreaties—
While he, as if at last compell'd
To speak what better were withheld,
In anger cried, "Your son must perish—
My wife alone his life can cherish—

On her th' adult'rer dotes—and I
My rival's hated sight would fly."
The sire was now alike distrest,
To save his boy, or hurt his guest:
Long struggled he 'twixt love and shame;
At last parental love o'ercame.
And now he begs without remorse
His friend to grant this last resource;
Entreats him o'er and o'er t' apply
This hard, but only remedy.
"What, prostitute my wife!" exclaims
The doctor, "pimp for lawless flames?"—
Yet still the father teased and prest;—
"Oh grant a doting sire's request!
The necessary cure permit,
And make my happiness complete."
Thus did the doctor's art and care
The anxious parent's heart prepare:
And found him trying long and often
The term adultery to soften.
—He own'd, "that custom, sure enough,
Had made it sound a little rough:
"But then," said he, "we ought to trace
The source and causes of the case.
All prejudice let's lay aside,
And taking Nature for our guide,
We'll try with candour to examine
On what pretence this fashion came in."
Then much he talk'd of man's first state,
(A copious subject for debate!)
Of choice and instinct then disputes,
With many parallels to brutes;
All tending notably to prove
That instinct was the law of Love;—
In short, that Nature gave us woman,
Like earth and air, to hold in common.
Then learned authors would he quote,
Philosophers of special note,
Who only thought their dames worth feeding,
As long as they held out for breeding,
And when employ'd in studious courses,
Would let them out, as we do horses.
Last follow'd a facetious query,
To rank the sex *naturæ feræ*.

The doctor, when the speech was closed,
Confess'd he was a little posed.
Then looking impudently grave,
"And how would you," said he, "behave?
Would you part freely with your wife,
To save a friend's expiring life?"—
"By Jove, I'd act as I advise,"
The father eagerly replies.—
"Then," cries the doctor, "I have done—
Entreat yourself to save your son.
He loves your girl—can you endure
To work the necessary cure?
If it were just that I should give
My wife to cause a friend to live,
You surely may bestow with joy
Your mistress, to preserve your boy."
He spoke with sense, he spoke with art:
Conviction touch'd the father's heart:—
"'Tis hard," he cried, "'tis passing hard,
To lose what I so much regard!
But when two dread misfortunes press,
'Tis wisdom sure to choose the less."

EPISTLE XIV.* THE PROVIDENT SHEPHERDESS.

PHILEMATIUM TO RUMUSUS.

HENCE! hence! ye songsters; hence! ye idle train!
Vain is the song, the pipe's soft warbling vain;
In me nor joy thy strains inspire,
Nor passion can thy numbers move;
The thrills of the resounding lyre
To me are not the thrills of Love.
For I know well to value gold aright;
I scorn a passion—while its gifts are light.

Puff not your cheeks, fond youths! dismiss the flute;
Hush'd be the harp, the soft guitar be mute:
Or hie where pensive Echo sits
Moping the lonely rocks among;
She'll listen to your chanting fits,
Applaud, and pay you song for song.

* *Epistle XIV.*] This letter is from a girl to her lovers, who courted her with music instead of money.

But I know well to value gold aright,
And scorn a passion while its gifts are light.

Do, good Charmides, stop thy tuneful tongue;
And friendly Lycias trust not to thy song.
There is a sound—and well you know
That sound I never heard from thee—
The smallest clink of which, I vow,
Is sweetest harmony to me.
For I've been taught to value gold aright,
And scorn a passion while its gifts are light.

Why do your vows in tuneful numbers flow?
Why urge the joys I do not wish to know?
Say, youth, can thy poetic fire
Make folly pleasant to the ear?
Can thy soft notes, and soothing lyre,
Make oaths, and lovers' oaths, sincere?
Go! go! I know to value gold aright,
And scorn a passion while its gifts are light.

Soft is thy note, my friend, I grant 'tis soft;
Sweet is thy lay—but I have heard it oft:
And will thy piping ne'er disgust,
When all the novelty is past?
Your stock will fail—you know it must;
And sweetest sounds will tire at last.
Then now's the time to value gold aright,
To scorn a passion while its gifts are light.

When the cold hand of age has damp'd thy fire,
Unstrung thy harp, and hush'd th' unheeded lyre;
Say, will thy tuneless, crazy voice
Keep chilling penury away?
Will mem'ry lead us to rejoice
Because, poor bard, thou once couldst play?
No! no! Then still I'll value gold aright,
And still the lover scorn whose gifts are light.

Then hence! ye songsters; hence! ye idle train!
Vain is the song, the pipe's soft warbling vain:
No idle triflings captivate this breast;—
Produce your money—I'll excuse the rest.

Puff not your cheeks, fond youths! dismiss the flute,
Hush'd be the harp, the soft guitar be mute;

Such signs of passion in contempt I hold:—
But there's substantial proof of love—in gold.

I know you fancy me an easy fool,
Raw, and undisciplined in Venus' school;
A thoughtless victim, whom a song could move,
And each fond lay inspire with throbs of love:
Deluded swains; but vain do ye opine—
Know, the whole science of intrigue is mine.
A dame, experienced in the mystic art,
Taught me to play with ablest skill my part;
Taught me to laugh at songs, and empty strains;
And taught how Cupid shone—in golden chains.
My sister too, and all her am'rous train,
Tutor'd my youth,—nor were their lessons vain.
Full oft her suitors hath she frankly told,
"Your aim is beauty, sirs, and mine is—gold:
Each other's wants let's mutually supply."—
'Twas thus my sister spoke,—and thus speak I.
With her, I laugh at Cupid's batter'd name,
With her, I mock what fools call gen'rous flame;
With her, my theme's to value gold aright,
And scorn a passion while its gifts are light.

EPISTLE XV.* THE FORCE OF LOVE.

APHRODISIUS TO LYSIMACHUS.

Love, or of force, or of persuasion,
Avails him as best suits th' occasion:
And all, who've felt his tingling dart,
Will own its conquest o'er the heart.
Love can the thirst of blood assuage,
And bid the battle cease to rage;
Quell the rude discord, and compose
To peace the most determined foes.
Vain is the lance, and vain the shield,
And vain the wide embattled field;
Vain the long military train,
And Mars with all his terrors vain.
Cupid his stubborn angry soul
Can with a little shaft control.—
Each champion, who with fury brave
Would stem war's most destructive wave,

* *Epistle XV.*] A narrative.

Without a stroke, to Love will yield,
And quit at once his useless shield.—
T' insure your credit to my text,
A case in point is here annext.

Two cities of no mean estate,
Miletus this, and Myus that,
Had long in mutual conflicts bled,
While commerce droop'd with languid head.
And only while Miletus kept
Diana's feast, the contest slept:
A solemn truce was then allow'd:—
At Dian's shrine each city bow'd.—
And, till the festive revels cease,
'Twas naught but harmony and peace.
Then gleams the hostile blade again,
And reeking gore manures the plain.
But Venus little could sustain
That Discord should eternal reign;
So closed for ever their dispute:
And thus she found the means to do't.

From Myus to Miletus came
A girl (Pïeria was her name,)
Bright as the morn she was by nature,
And Venus now retouch'd each feature.

Then, at what time the sacred train
Attended at Diana's fane,
The prince of the Miletians came,
And saw the maid, and felt the flame.
And soon the prince his love address'd,
"Speak, charmer, speak thy first request?
Whate'er thy wish, whate'er thy want,
Be't mine to make a double grant."
But thee, fair maid, supreme in mind,
As well as charms, o'er womankind,
No idle choice seduced aside,
No giddy wish, no hurtful pride:
Thee could no costly gem insnare,
No trinket to adorn thy hair:
No Carian slave didst thou request,
No precious chain, no Tyrian vest.
But long didst stand with downcast eye,
As hesitating to reply;

Essaying, but in vain, to speak,
While blushes dyed thy modest cheek.
At last thy falt'ring tongue with fear
Thus utter'd faintly in his ear,
"Prince, to these walls give access free,
At all times, for my friends and me."
Phrygius full well perceived her drift,
Yet nobly ratified his gift.
A peace was soon proclaim'd around,
And mighty Love the treaty bound:
A more sufficient guarantee,
Than any bonds or oaths could be.
And this example well may prove
That naught's so eloquent as Love:
For oft had orators, whose style was
Mellifluent as the seer's of Pylos,*
Convened, debated, and return'd,
While still the rage of battle burn'd,
But Cupid's sweeter elocution
Brought matters quick to a conclusion.
And hence the Ionian maids deduce
Th' expression now so much in use,
"May we such noble presents have,
As erst the princely Phrygius gave!
And may our lords as faithful be,
As thine, Piëria, was to thee."

EPISTLE XVI.† THE BASHFUL LOVER.

LAMPRIAS TO PHILIPPIDES.

In secret pining thus I sigh'd,
"Love, thou alone my flame dost know,
Who didst the fatal arrow guide,
And Venus, who prepared thy bow.

"Not to my friend, to her much less
Dare I my hopeless flame disclose;
And love conceal'd burns to excess,
And with redoubled ardour glows.

* *Seer of Pylos.*] Nestor, famous in Homer for his eloquence:
† *Epistle XVI.*] A lover, who long had feared to disclose his passion, at length describes to his friend the circumstances of success.

"Me, Cupid, hast thou robb'd of rest;
Wound too the maid whose love I seek;
But pierce with lighter shaft her breast,
Lest grief make wan that blooming cheek."

Sweet did she speak, and sweetly smile,
When lately I admittance had,
Yet seem'd she so reserved the while,
The inconsistence made me mad.

Her snowy hands, her lovely face,
I view'd, with admiration fill'd:
Her easy negligence of dress,
Her bosom, seat of bliss, reveal'd!

Still dared I not my love make known,
But silently to Cupid pray'd,
"Grant that she first her passion own!"—
The powerful archer lent his aid.

Sudden she seized my hand—her eyes
With am'rous elocution speak—
Instant her wonted rigour flies,
And Love sits dimpling on her cheek.

Intoxicated with desire,
Her panting neck she did incline;
And kiss'd me with such life and fire,
I thought her soul would blend with mine.

—Description can no further go,
T' express our happiness too weak—
But well did half-form'd accents show,
Our joys were more than we could speak.

EPISTLE XVII.* THE HAUGHTY BEAUTY.

XENOPEITHES TO DEMARETUS.

YES, she is cold!—oh! how severely cold!—
That breast Love's gentle taper ne'er could warm.—
Who could believe a heart of savage mould
Was e'er enshrined within so bright a form?

* *Epistle XVII.*] From a lover complaining of the pride and inaccessibility of his mistress.

Yet not unnoticed in the fields of Love
Have I sustain'd full many a brisk campaign:
For many a trophy strove,—nor vainly strove,—
While maids, and wives, and widows own'd my reign.

But now, alas! that idle boast expires;
And Daphnis wears the laurels I had won.
Now Xenopeithes pines with new desires,
And all his fame in one defeat is flown.

Yes—she is every way replete with wiles—
Loves she?—'tis silence.—Is she loved?—'tis scorn.
Flattery she hates; at proffer'd gifts she smiles.—
As law, must her imperious will be borne.

Laughs she?—her lips alone that laughter own;
No smiling dimples on her cheeks are spread;
And once I ventured to reprove her frown,
And told her, "Charms should love inspire, not dread."

As well might I have spoken to the air,
Or to an ass have touch'd the melting lute.
But still—The falling drop the stone will wear,*—
And still I'll ply my disappointed suit.

With more delusive baits my hook I'll gild—
Still on my line the slipp'ry prize shall play.
And 'tis Love's grand distinction not to yield,
But toil and toil, although he lose the day.

Ten years could vanquish heaven-defended Troy.
And oh! do thou, my friend, assist my aim—
(For thou hast felt the all-destructive boy)—
The same our labours, as our skiff the same.†

EPISTLE XVIII.‡ EXCUSES.

CALLICÆTA TO MEIRACIOPHILA.

UNNUMBER'D pleasures are your own,
Who youth and beauty prize alone—

* *The falling drop*, &c.] An ancient proverb.
Nonne vides etiam guttas in saxa cadentes,
Humoris longo spatio pertundere saxa. LUCRET. lib. iii.
"Hard bodies, which the lightest stroke receive,
In length of time will moulder and decay;
And stones with drops of rain are wash'd away."

† *The same our labours*, &c.] Another Greek proverb.
In eâdem es navi.— CIC. Epist. ii.

‡ *Epistle XVIII.*] A panegyric on a dainty courtesan.

Who seek not riches to excess,
But place them after happiness:
Who from the sighing, am'rous crew
Select alone the lovely few;
And when a beauteous swain you meet,
His flame with mutual ardour greet;
But scorn the mean, the sottish hind,
Whose wealth would bribe you to be kind.
You can, like Spartan hounds, discover,
With quickest scent, a worthy lover,
Skilful to beat, to wind, to double,
For game that may reward your trouble.
Then hoary dotards you despise—
'Tis that which proves you truly wise.
Were any wretch, deform'd and old,
To bring inestimable gold,
His treasures vainly were employ'd,
Though great as Tantalus enjoy'd:
Not all his presents could atone
For youth, and health, and vigour flown;
Haggard with age, and with disease,
You'd loathe his person—scorn his fees.
The mere description shocks one much—
How then th' original to touch?—
Hence many a cogent cause appears
T' advise equality of years;
For similarity of ages
To similar pursuits engages.
And you draw arguments from truth
In praise of every diff'rent youth.
Say, has your love a little nose?
How neat, how delicate it shows!—
If aquiline, it arches high,
Oh! the grand type of majesty!—
If neither large it be, nor small,
'Tis due proportion—best of all!—
A swarthy skin, is manly grace;
The fairer youths, a heavenly race;—
In short, you catch at each pretence,
And torture words to every sense,
For every youthful swain to find
Excuses, why you should be kind:
As drunkards every reason think
May sanction a demand for drink.

"Come—we are young—let's t' other pot"—
"The tankard here, to cheer the old"—
Some drink because "'tis parching hot,"—
And some, because "'tis bitter cold."
T' exemplify the love of wine,
I cease to write—the case is mine.

EPISTLE XIX.* MERIT RESCUED FROM SHAME.

EUPHRONIUM TO THELXINOE.

Sure Fortune has smiled on Melissa benign,
From the theatre freed, in abundance to shine:
While I, less in favour, am still doom'd to linger
My life on the stage, an unfortunate singer.
Melissa's beginning was poor past expression—
For when she first studied her scenic profession,
Her mother and she in a pitiful cot
Were starving together, and scarce worth a groat;
But soon she eclipsed all the girls of her age,
And her musical talents engaged the whole stage.
At first people sneer'd, to distinguish their taste;
But they soon turn'd to praise, and they envied at last.
Her charms, and her dress, and her musical skill,
Soon gain'd her rich generous lovers at will.
She was splendidly kept,—but was highly afraid
Lest breeding should spoil so important a trade.
(And frequently breeding, to tell you the truth,
Is the worst of destroyers to beauty and youth.)
Among the old gossips she learn'd to divine
Whene'er she conceived, by infallible sign:
So when the case happen'd, she told her old dame,
And to me for advice, as more knowing, they came.
I gave my opinion, and added a drug,
Which demolish'd her fears, expeditious and snug.
But with Charicles when she commenced an affair,
Whose wealth was immense, as his beauty was rare,
She changed her request to the rulers above,
And with fervency pray'd for a pledge of their love.
The gods of Olympus consentingly smiled,
And Lucina's assistance deliver'd the child—*

* *Epistle XIX.*] From a girl on the stage to her friend, describing the good fortune of a young actress of their acquaintance.

* *And Lucina's assistance*, &c.] Both Juno and Diana were worshipped under this name, as goddesses presiding over child-birth.

A child with all kinds of perfection endued,
And the father himself in a miniature view'd.
The mother with rapture beheld the young boy,
The little Eutychides, offspring of joy.
For children, the more they are beautiful, move
With greater incitement their parents to love.
While Charicles, blest in an infant so dear,
Determined the fame of its mother to clear:
From her scenic employment he rescued the fair,
His hand, and his heart, and his riches to share:
And the lady forgot, while she gazed on her son,
Both the life she had led, and the risk she had run.
A visit I lately to Pythias paid,
(For she took a new name when she left her old trade,)
She show'd me her jewels, each ring, and each toy;
—And be sure I'd a sight of her sweet little boy:
His cheek I kiss'd sweetly—but tenderly too;
For 'twas soft as the rose, it resembled in hue.—
The lady's so changed,—'tis amazing to see't;
So modest her air, and her look so discreet:
Her hair braided neat, without art or design;
Her ornaments grave; neither flaunty nor fine.
When she walks, 'tis with caution and prudence, they say,
And you'd think by her steps she had ne'er gone astray.
So one of these days, when the time you can spare,
I advise you, Thelxinoë, visit the fair:
But be very exact not Melissa to name her,
'Twould look like an insult intended to shame her:
The word, when I saw her, was at my tongue's end,
But they gave me a jog, and the hint saved your friend.

EPISTLE XX.* THE JAILOR TRICKED.

PHYLACIDES TO PHRURION.

Late an adult'rous youth I seized;
And "guard him closely," was the charge.
But with his age and figure pleased,
I kept him prisoner at large.

Unfetter'd through my house he stray'd:
Thought I, he may reform his life.—
He my compassion well repaid,
And gratefully seduced my wife.

* *Epistle XX.*] From a jailor, whose wife was seduced by a young man confined in his house for adultery.

The thief, Eurybates,* ne'er strain'd
His wit to so complete a job;
Who first his jailor's pity gain'd,
Then show'd him how he used to rob.

The brazen pens they wrote withal
Sharper than needles did he grind:
Then stuck them in the prison wall,
And fled—but left their wives behind.

Soon as the villany was heard,
Which robb'd my bosom of its rest,
It first incredible appear'd,
And then became the public jest.

—The public jest—ah! that wounds deep—
That I—who live by bolts and chains,
In my own prison could not keep
The honour of my wife from stains.

EPISTLE XXI.† CRUEL COMPASSION.

ARISTOMENES TO MYRONIDES.

The god of the love-darting-bow,
Whose bliss is man's heart to destroy,
Oft contrives to embitter our woe
By a specious resemblance of joy.—

Long—long had Architeles sigh'd
The fair Telesippe to gain:
She coolly his passion denied,
Yet seem'd somewhat moved at his pain.

At length she consented to hear;
But 'twas done with a view to beguile:
For her terms were most harsh and severe,
And a frown was as good as her smile.

"You may freely," says she, "touch my breast,
And kiss, while a kiss has its charms;
And (provided I am not undrest)
Encircle me round in your arms.

* *Eurybates.*] A famous robber of Attica, who escaped once from prison by means of some brazen pens, by which he descended the walls.

† *Epistle XXI.*] A whimsical account of a lover and his mistress, who admitted him to every favour but the last.

"In short, any favour you please,
But expect not, nor think of the last:
Lest enraged I revoke my decrees,
And your sentence of exile be cast."—

"Be it so," cried the youth, with delight,
"Thy pleasure, my fair one, is mine:
Since I'm blest as a prince at your sight,
Sure to touch thee, will make me divine.

"But why keep one favour alone,
And grant such a number beside?"—
"Because the men value the boon
But only so long as denied.

"They seek it with labour and pain;
When gain'd, throw it quickly away:
For youth is unsettled and vain,
And its choice scarce persists for a day."

—Thus pines the poor victim away,
Forced to nibble and starve on a kiss;
Served worse than e'en eunuchs—for they
Can never feel torture like this.

EPISTLE XXII.* PRIDE DEJECTED.

LUCIAN TO ALCIPHRON.

Long Glycera had loved, and still
Charisius loves; but brooking ill
Those supercilious airs of his,
(For pride, you know, his foible is,)
Determined, if she could, at once
Her hopeless passion to renounce.
A wish to love him, caused her hate:
Hatred too strong did love create.
Howe'er to Doris she applied,
Her maid, her oracle, her guide:
To her all circumstances stated;
And long together they debated:
At length their consultation done,
The confidant went out alone.

* *Epistle XXII.* The address of a cunning maid-servant.

She'd walk'd through half a street and better,
When at a turn Charisius met her:
Ask'd how she fared, and how she sped.—
"So, so," she cried, and shook her head.
"Is aught the matter?" said the youth;
"For God's sake, Doris, tell me truth."
Forcing a tear from either eye,
The crafty jade thus answer'd sly:
"My mistress madly dotes upon
That dolt, that idiot, Polemon.
What's worse, and you'll esteem it such,
She hates your company as much."—
"Is't true?" th' astonish'd lover cries.
"Alas! too true," the maid replies:
"I'm sure she beats me black and blue,
If once I dare but mention you."—
'Twas now Charisius plainly proved
He loved her more than he was loved.
(For oft when men neglect the fair,
Whose favours they might freely share,
A rival cleverly thrown in,
Their assiduities may win.)
His haughtiness was now no more;
He begg'd, protested, wept, and swore.
(For beyond bounds is pride dejected,
If once it find itself neglected.)
"Wherein," he cried, "wherein have I
Affronted her unknowingly?
For never, purposely, I swear,
Offended I in aught the fair.—
But I'll go deprecate her ire,
In person my offence inquire.—
Then let my charmer bring her action;
I'll make her any satisfaction.
Though I have err'd, will no repentance
Induce her to revoke my sentence?"
But Doris hesitated yet,
To make the triumph more complete.
"If on my knees I try to move her,"
Exclaim'd the miserable lover,
"Still must I meet a harsh denial?"—
"Far be 't from me t' oppose the trial,"
Said Doris—"go—entreat her pity;
And still, perhaps, she may admit ye."—

Charisius now, with hope inspired,
(That beauteous youth, so long admired!)
A kind reception flew to meet,
And fell at his beloved's feet.
But Glycera in raptures gazed,
And from his knees the suppliant raised;
Then slyly turn'd about to kiss
The hand which had been touch'd by his.
And soon was his forgiveness past,
For Love forbade her rage to last.
The crafty maid stood smiling by
The while, and archly wink'd her eye,
To show, that she alone had wit
To make the haughty swain submit.

EPISTLE XXIII.* THE DOUBLE MISFORTUNE.

MONOCHORUS TO PHILOCUBUS.

How hard is my lot, and my fate how perverse!
Whom two dread misfortunes join forces to curse:
When one is sufficient to plague one's life through,
'Tis the devil indeed to be saddled with two:
And that each is an evil, will scarce be denied,
Though which the severest, is hard to decide.
First, a profligate jilt throws my money away—
Then my happier rivals all beat me at play:
For as soon as the dice and the tables are set,
Love pops in my head—spoils each cast and each bet.
Thus all my antagonists win what they will,
Though much my inferiors in practice and skill:
For disturb'd, I forget how the chances have gone,
And place to their side what I've gain'd on my own.
Then leaving my play for my mistress, I meet
A rebuff more severe than my former defeat:
For my rivals outbid me, enrich'd at my cost,
And give, what the moment before I have lost.
Scorn'd and slighted am I, the while they are caress,
And I lend them the weapon to stab my own breast.—
Thus misfortunes, together when join'd, become worse,
And gain from each other additional force.

* *Epistle XXIII.*] From a man unfortunate both in play and love.

EPISTLE XXIV.* CONSTANCY.

MUSARIUM TO HER DEAREST LYSIAS.

My lovers, a detested set,
Last night at my apartments met.—
Long did they sit, and stare, while each
Seem'd to have lost the powers of speech;
Expecting when his neighbour's jaws
Should open in the common cause.
At length the boldest of the gang
Arose, and made a fine harangue.
In which the wordy youth profest
Only t' advise me for the best:
But really meant (I guess'd his theme)
To rival you in my esteem.
"No girl," said he, "who treads the stage,
Like you can all our hearts engage;
And since your charms surpass them all,
Why should your profits be so small?
Whereas we gladly would supply you,
But are repulsed and slighted by you
For Lysias; who, to say the truth,
Is but a very awkward youth.
Did he remarkably excel us,
We had no reason to be jealous:
And you might feasibly maintain
That beauty pleased you more than gain.
But now you've not a single plea
For praising him to this degree.
And yet you still remain the same,
And stun us with his odious name;
So oft repeated, that we seem
To hear it even when we dream.
Can it be passion thus to dote?
No—'t must some phrensy sure denote.
But all we now desire to hear, is
A faithful answer to our queries.
Can Lysias only touch your breast?—
Resolve you to dismiss the rest?—
Speak but the word—and we desist;
But let us know your mind at least."

* *Epistle XXIV.*] From a girl to her favoured lover, for whose sake she had dismissed her other admirers.

Thus the whole evening did they preach
In many a long and fruitless speech.
But 'twould require a day and more
To copy half their nonsense o'er—
Suffice it, all their idle chat
Went in at this ear, out at that.
This, and this only, I replied,
"'Tis Cupid that my choice did guide:
He bade my heart its feelings own;
For Lysias live—for him alone."
"Who," cried they, "would that wretch admire,
That antidote to all desire?
What heart for such a clown can pine?"—
"Mine," answer'd I with rapture, "mine."
Then rising, "Fare ye well," I cried,
"But cease my lover to deride.
Your proffer'd treasures I despise,
In Lysias all my transport lies."—
Haste then, loved youth, oh hither haste;
The precious moments do not waste:
Oh bring me but one tender kiss;
With int'rest I'll repay the bliss.
Oh! grant me, Venus, this request,
And send the idol of my breast.—
Come, Lysias, come, and soothe my pangs,
On thee my very being hangs.
E'en while I write time slips away:
Then why this torturing delay?—
Ne'er shall those brutes avail with me—
They're satyrs, when compared with thee.

EPISTLE XXV.* THE SISTERS.

PHILANIS TO PETALA.

As yesterday I went to dine
With Pamphilus, a swain of mine,
I took my sister, little heeding
The net I for myself was spreading;
Though many circumstances led
To prove she'd mischief in her head.
For first her dress in every part
Was studied with the nicest art:

* *Epistle XXV.*] From a girl, accusing her sister of seducing her lover's affections.

Deck'd out with necklaces and rings,
And twenty other foolish things;
And she had curl'd and bound her hair
With more than ordinary care:
And then, to show her youth the more,
A light, transparent robe she wore—
From head to heel she seem'd t' admire;
In raptures all her fine attire:
And often turn'd aside to view
If others gazed with raptures too.—
At dinner, grown more bold and free,
She parted Pamphilus and me;
For veering round unheard, unseen,
She slyly drew her chair between.
Then with alluring, am'rous smiles,
And nods, and other wanton wiles,
The unsuspecting youth ensnared,
And rivall'd me in his regard.—
Next she affectedly would sip
The liquor that had touch'd his lip.
He, whose whole thoughts to love incline,
And heated with th' enliv'ning wine,
With interest repaid her glances,
And answered all her kind advances.
Thus sip they from the goblet's brink
Each other's kisses while they drink;
Which with the sparkling wine combined,
Quick passage to the heart did find.
Then Pamphilus an apple broke,
And at her bosom aim'd the stroke;
While she the fragment kiss'd and press'd,
And hid it wanton in her breast.
But I, be sure, was in amaze,
To see my sister's artful ways;
"These are returns," I said, "quite fit
To me, who nursed you when a chit.
For shame, lay by this envious art;—
Is this to act a sister's part?"
But vain were words, entreaties vain,
The crafty witch secured my swain.—
By heavens, my sister does me wrong
But oh! she shall not triumph long;
Well Venus knows I'm not in fault—
'Twas she who gave the first assault:

And since our peace her treachery broke,
Let me return her stroke for stroke.
She'll quickly feel, and to her cost,
Not all their fire my eyes have lost—
And soon with grief shall she resign
Six of her swains for one of mine.

EPISTLE XXVI.* THE PANTOMIME ACTRESS.

SPEUSIPPUS TO PANARETE.

Long had Fame thy praises sung,
Sweetest theme of every tongue:
Long mine ears those graces knew,
Which till now ne'er blest my view.
Now thy charms my bosom fire,
More and more I now admire;
Finding them so far excel
All that Fame had words to tell.
On thy gestures who could gaze,
Nor be lost in wild amaze?
Who unhurt, with bosom cold,
Could thy beauteous form behold?—
'Mong th' immortal race divine,
Venus and Polymnia† shine.
They presided at thy birth,
And ordain'd, that thou on earth,
Like th' expressive muse shouldst move,
And inspire, like Venus, love.
Art thou orator or painter?
Which allusion is the quainter?
Words thou canst with skill express;
Things in native colours dress;
While thy animated arm,
Limbs with elocution warm;
Motions just, and nicely true,
Are thy tongue and pencil too.
Thou, thus eloquently mute,
Canst each part, like Proteus, suit:
As the strains, or light or slow,
Bid successive passions flow.

* *Epistle XXVI.*] A panegyrical Epistle to a pantomime actress (ΡΗΙΞΤΕΡΙΔΑ). The celebrated Casaubon, who wrote some critiques upon this work, points out a peculiar elegance in this Epistle; but it is to be feared much of it depended on the expressions of the original.—However, it throws some light on the art of the ancient times.

† *Polymnia* particularly presided over gesture.

Now with loud-applauding hand
See the rapt spectators stand:
Now you hear th' astonish'd throng
Joining in alternate song:
Now they shake their robes in praise:*
Now in speechless wonder gaze:
While in whispers each explains
What thy mimic silence means;
And to show his approbation,
Labours at thy imitation.
Thou with gestures nice, exact,
Dost like Caramallus act:
Him thy all-expressive grace
Doth with true resemblance trace.
Pleased may e'en the wise, the old,
Thy dumb eloquence behold:
Such amusements to attend,
Gravity may well unbend.—
I, on public business bound,
Many cities have gone round;
Either Rome I've travell'd through,
Both the ancient and the new;
Yet in neither did I see
Aught that might be matched with thee.—

Such thy charms, and such thy art;
Blest is he who wins thy heart!

EPISTLE XXVII.† THE COXCOMB.

CLEARCHUS TO AMYNANDER.

As just beneath a lady's eye,
A youth officiously pass'd by,
Another lady, standing near,
Jogg'd her, and whisper'd in her ear,
"Yon swain, by Beauty's queen 'tis true,
Walk'd by to be observed by you;
And really, on examination,
His figure merits observation.
His dress is very neatly laced,
And fashion'd with a pretty taste.

* *Now they shake their robes*, &c.] This was a sign of the highest approbation among the ancients.

† *Epistle XXVII.*] From a lady ridiculing the addresses of a self-sufficient lover.

And then observe, his jetty hair
Is buckled with the nicest care
(For Cupid can transform, you know,
The greatest sloven to a beau)."
"That man," said t'other, "I detest,*
However shaped, however dress'd,
Who flatters his own charms too much,
And thinks we can't resist the touch.
This made him choose, and this alone,
The name of Philo for his own:
This gave the self-sufficient airs
Which in his haughty brow he bears.
I hate the lover who can dare
To be a rival to the fair:
Who, if she deign to bless his arms,
Thinks he repays her charms for charms.
The man who courts a lady so,
Courts only that the world may know
But hear me vex my stately swain,
It cannot fail to entertain:—
'A youth there is who frequent tries
With love my bosom to surprise;
In vain my court he daily haunts,
In vain his idle ditties chaunts;—
Yet fears not to repeat his song,
Both every day, and all day long:
While I tormented hide my face,
And blush myself for his disgrace.'"

Thus with insulting words the fair
Mock'd her desponding lover's care:
And then, to fasten his devotion,
Contrived, with easy, careless motion,
A leg of most enchanting shape
Should from beneath her robe escape.

The poor Adonis heard, and view'd
Just as the lady wish'd he should:
And, "Oh! insulting maid," he cried,
"Continue still my flame to chide:
Not me thy bitter taunts approach,
The god of Love alone they touch:

* *That man*, &c.] This is a very lively description of an intriguing coxcomb; and perhaps not inapplicable to some modern characters.

Nor he, I trust, will bear them long,
But choose an arrow sure and strong;
The shaft thy stubborn heart shall gore,
And thou in turn my love implore."
"That dreadful lot far distant be,"
She cried affectedly, "from me!
Go on, vain youth, persist to please
Your pride with such conceits as these;
And wait till your superior beauty
Compels my love-sick heart to sue t' ye;
And till avenging Cupid draws
His bow, to vanquish in your cause.
Meantime, still haunt my court in vain,
And chaunt, and watch, and chaunt again:
On Love's tempestuous billows tost,
Too weak to keep or quit your post;
Forbidden aught to touch that's mine,
And left with hopeless cares to pine,
And not a kiss your toils repay—
Yet have not strength to get away."

EPISTLE XXVIII.* THE RIVAL FRIENDS.

NICOSTRATUS TO TIMOCRATES.

TYRANT o' the heart! inconstant, faithless boy!
Source of these tears—as once dear source of joy!—
Inhuman trifler! whose delusive smile
Charms to ensnare, and soothes but to beguile—
Hence! tyrant, I renounce thy sway.—And thou,
False goddess, who prepar'st the stripling's bow,
Whose skill marks out the soft, the yielding heart,
Guides the boy's arm, and barbs the madd'ning dart,—
Thou shalt no more my midnight vows receive,
To thee no more the votive fruits I'll give,
No more for thee the festive altar raise,
Nor ever tune another note of praise.

This I have done.—Witness, each sacred grove!
Where wand'ring lovers sing the maid they love;
Ye awful fanes! to this false goddess raised,
Fanes that have oft with my free incense blazed;

* *Epistle XXVIII.*] From a lover, resigning his mistress to his friend.

And chiefly thou, sweet solitary bird,
Bear witness to my vows,—for thou hast heard;
And many a night hast braved the dewy wind,
To soothe, with thy soft notes, my pensive mind:
But when the churlish blast has hush'd thy lays,
Have I not filled the interval with praise—
With praise still varied to the Cyprian queen,
And sighs, the heart's best tribute, breathed between;
Till slumb'ring Echo started from her cave,
Admiring at the late response she gave;
And thou, best warbler of the feather'd throng,
With double sweetness didst renew thy song.
—Nor were ye slow, ye gentle gales of night,
To catch such notes, and stop your silent flight,
Till on your dewy wings, with morrow's rays,
To Cypria's queen ye waft the song of praise.
—In vain! officious gales;—she heeds you not;
My vows are scorn'd, and all my gifts forgot:
A happier rival must her power defend;—
And in that rival I have lost a friend!

Thee, then, my friend—if yet a wretch may claim
A last attention by that once dear name—
Thee I address;—the cause you must approve;—
I yield you—what I cannot cease to love.
Be thine the blissful lot, the nymph be thine;—
I yield my love—sure friendship may be mine.
Yet must no thought of me torment thy breast;—
Forget me, if my griefs disturb thy rest,
Whilst still I'll pray that thou may'st never know
The pangs of baffled love, or feel my woe.
But sure to thee, dear charming—fatal maid!
(For me thou'st charm'd, and me thou hast betray'd,)
This last request I need not recommend—
Forget the lover thou, as he the friend.
Bootless such charge! for ne'er did pity move
A heart that mock'd the suit of humble love.—
Yet in some thoughtful hour, if such can be,
Where Love, Timocrates, is join'd with thee,
In some lone pause of joy, when pleasure's pall,
And fancy broods o'er joys it can't recall,
Haply a thought of me, (for thou, my friend,
May'st then have taught thy stubborn heart to bend,)
A thought of him, whose passion was not weak,
May dash one ransient blush upon her cheek;

Haply a tear—(for I shall surely then
Be past all power to raise her scorn again)—
Haply, I say, one self-dried tear may fall:
One tear she'll give,—for whom I yielded all!
Then wanton on thy neck for comfort hang,
And soon forget the momentary pang;
Whilst thy fond arms—Oh down, my jealous soul!
What racking thoughts within my bosom roll!
How busy fancy kindles every vein,
Tears my burst heart, and fires my madd'ning brain.—
Hush'd be the ill-timed storm—for what hast thou,
Poor outcast wretch, to do with passion now?
I will be calm;—'tis Reason's voice commands,
And injured Friendship shakes her recent bands.
I will be calm;—but thou, sweet peace of mind,
That rock'd my pillow to the whistling wind;
Thou flatt'rer, Hope! thyself a cure for sorrow,
Who never show'd'st the wretch a sad to-morrow,
Thou coz'ner, ever whisp'ring at my ear
What vanity was ever pleased to hear—
Whither, ye faithless phantoms, whither flown!
—Alas! these tears bear witness ye are gone.
Return!—In vain the call! ye cannot find
One blissful seat within the sullen mind;
Ye cannot mix with Pride and Surly Care;
Ye cannot brood with Envy and Despair.

My life has lost its aim! that fatal fair
Was all its object, all its hope or care;
She was the goal to which my course was bent,
Where every wish, where every thought was sent;
A secret influence darted from her eyes,—
Each look, attraction! and herself the prize.
Concentred there, I lived for her alone,—
To make her glad, and to be blest, was one.

Her I have lost!—and can I blame this poor
Forsaken heart—sad heart that joys no more!
That faintly beats against my aching breast,
Conscious it wants the animating guest:
Then senseless droops, nor yields a sign of pain,
Save the sad sigh it breathes, to search in vain.

Adieu, my friend,—nor blame this sad adieu,—
Though sorrow guides my pen, it blames not you.

Forget me—'tis my prayer; nor seek to know
The fate of him whose portion must be woe,
Till the cold earth outstretch her friendly arms,
And Death convince me that he can have charms.

E'en when I write, with desert views around,
An emblem of my state has sorrow found:
I saw a little stream full briskly glide,
Whilst some near spring renew'd its infant tide;
But when a churlish hand disturb'd its source,
How soon the panting riv'let flagg'd its course!
Awhile it skulk'd sad murm'ring through the grass,
Whilst whisp'ring rushes mock'd its lazy pace;
Then sunk its head, by the first hillock's side,
And sought the covert earth, it once supplied.

VERSES TO THE MEMORY OF GARRICK,

SPOKEN AS A MONODY, AT THE THEATRE ROYAL, IN DRURY LANE.

To the right honourable COUNTESS SPENCER, whose approbation and esteem was justly considered by MR. GARRICK as the highest panegyric his talents or conduct could acquire, this imperfect tribute to his memory is, with great deference, inscribed by her ladyship's most obedient humble servant,

March 25th, 1779. RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN.

If dying excellence deserves a tear,
If fond remembrance still is cherished here,
Can we persist to bid your sorrows flow
For fabled suff'rers and delusive woe?
Or with quaint smiles dismiss the plaintive strain,
Point the quick jest—indulge the comic vein—
Ere yet to buried Roscius we assign
One kind regret—one tributary line!
His fame requires we act a tenderer part:
His memory claims the tear you gave his art!
The general voice, the meed of mournful verse,
The splendid sorrows that adorn'd his hearse,
The throng that mourn'd as their dead favourite passed,
The graced respect that claim'd him to the last,
While Shakespeare's image from its hallow'd base
Seem'd to prescribe the grave, and point the place,—
Nor these,—nor all the sad regrets that flow
From fond fidelity's domestic woe,—
So much are Garrick's praise—so much his due—
As on this spot—one tear bestow'd by you.
Amid the hearts which seek ingenious fame,
Our toil attempts the most precarious claim!
To him whose mimic pencil wins the prize,
Obedient Fame immortal wreaths supplies:
Whate'er of wonder Reynolds now may raise,
Raphael still boasts contemporary praise:

Each dazzling light and gaudier bloom subdued,
With undiminish'd awe his works are view'd:
E'en Beauty's portrait wears a softer prime,
Touch'd by the tender hand of mellowing Time.
The patient Sculptor owns an humbler part,
A ruder toil, and more mechanic art;
Content with slow and timorous stroke to trace
The lingering line, and mould the tardy grace;
But once achieved—though barbarous wreck o'erthrow
The sacred fane, and lay its glories low,
Yet shall the sculptured ruin rise to day,
Graced by defect, and worshipp'd in decay;
Th' enduring record bears the artist's name,
Demands his honours, and asserts his fame.
Superior hopes the Poet's bosom fire;
O proud distinction of the sacred lyre!
Wide as th' inspiring Phœbus darts his ray,
Diffusive splendour gilds his votary's lay.
Whether the song heroic woes rehearse,
With epic grandeur, and the pomp of verse;
Or, fondly gay, with unambitious guile,
Attempt no prize but favouring beauty's smile;
Or bear dejected to the lonely grove
The soft despair of unprevailing love,—
Whate'er the theme—through every age and clime
Congenial passions meet th' according rhyme;
The pride of glory—pity's sigh sincere—
Youth's earliest blush—and beauty's virgin tear.
Such is their meed—their honours thus secure,
Whose arts yield objects, and whose works endure.
The Actor, only, shrinks from Time's award;
Feeble tradition is his memory's guard;
By whose faint breath his merits must abide,
Unvouch'd by proof—to substance unallied!
E'en matchless Garrick's art, to heaven resign'd,
No fix'd effect, no model leaves behind!
The grace of action—the adapted mien,
Faithful as nature to the varied scene;
Th' expressive glance—whose subtile comment draws
Entranced attention, and a mute applause;
Gesture that marks, with force and feeling fraught,
A sense in silence, and a will in thought;
Harmonious speech, whose pure and liquid tone
Gives verse a music, scarce confess'd its own;

As light from gems assumes a brighter ray,
And clothed with orient hues, transcends the day!
Passion's wild break—and frown that awes the sense
And every charm of gentler eloquence—
All perishable! like th' electric fire,
But strike the frame—and as they strike expire:
Incense too pure a bodied flame to bear,
Its fragrance charms the sense, and blends with air.
Where then—while sunk in cold decay he lies,
And pale eclipse for ever veils those eyes—
Where is the blest memorial that ensures
Our Garrick's fame?—whose is the trust?—'Tis yours.
And O! by every charm his art essay'd
To soothe your cares!—by every grief allay'd!
By the hush'd wonder which his accents drew!
By his last parting tear, repaid by you!
By all those thoughts, which many a distant night
Shall mark his memory with a sad delight!
Still in your hearts' dear record bear his name;
Cherish the keen regret that lifts his fame;
To you it is bequeath'd—assert the trust,
And to his worth—'tis all you can—be just.
What more is due from sanctifying Time,
To cheerful wit, and many a favour'd rhyme,
O'er his graced urn shall bloom, a deathless wreath,
Whose blossom'd sweets shall deck the mask beneath.
For these,—when Sculpture's votive toil shall rear
The due memorial of a loss so dear—
O loveliest mourner, gentle Muse! be thine
The pleasing woe to guard the laurell'd shrine.
As Fancy, oft by Superstition led
To roam the mansions of the sainted dead,
Has view'd, by shadowy eve's unfaithful gloom
A weeping cherub on a martyr's tomb—
So thou, sweet Muse, hang o'er his sculptured bier
With patient woe, that loves the lingering tear;
With thoughts that mourn—nor yet desire relief;
With meek regret, and fond enduring grief;
With looks that speak—He never shall return!
Chilling thy tender bosom, clasp his urn;
And with soft sighs disperse th' irreverend dust
Which Time may strew upon his sacred bust.

THE MOSS-COVERED GROTTO.*

UNCOUTH is this moss-cover'd grotto of stone,
And damp is the shape of this dew-dripping tree;
Yet I this rude grotto with rapture will own,
And, willow, thy damps are refreshing to me.

For this is the grotto where Delia reclined,
As late I in secret her confidence sought;
And this is the tree kept her safe from the wind,
As blushing she heard the grave lesson I taught.

Then tell me, thou grotto of moss-cover'd stone,
And tell me, thou willow with leaves dripping dew,
Did Delia seem vex'd when Horatio was gone,
And did she confess her resentment to you.

Methinks now each bough, as you're waving, it tries
To whisper a cause for the sorrow I feel;
To hint how she frown'd when I dared to advise,
And sigh'd when she saw that I did it with zeal.

True, true, silly leaves, so she did, I allow,
She frown'd, but no rage in her looks did I see;
She frown'd, but reflection had clouded her brow,
She sigh'd but perhaps 'twas in pity for me.

Then wave thy leaves brisker, thou willow of woe,
I tell thee no rage in her looks could I see;
I cannot—I will not, believe it was so,
She was not—she could not, be angry with me.

For well did she know that my heart meant no wrong,
It sunk at the thought but of giving her pain,
But trusted its task to a faltering tongue,
Which err'd from the feelings it could not explain.

Yet oh! if indeed I've offended the maid,
If Delia my humble monition refuse,
Sweet willow, the next time she visits thy shade,
Fan gently her bosom, and plead its excuse.

And thou, stony grot, in thy arch may'st preserve
Two lingering drops of the night-fallen dew,
And just let them fall at her feet and they'll serve
As tears of my sorrow entrusted to you.

* Verses addressed to Miss Linley, and left on the seat of the grotto in Spring Gardens, Bath.

Or lest they unheeded should fall at her feet,
Let them fall on her bosom of snow, and I swear
The next time I visit thy moss-cover'd seat,
I'll pay thee each drop with a genuine tear.

So may'st thou, green willow, for ages thus toss
Thy branches so lank o'er the slow-winding stream,
And thou, stony grotto, retain all thy moss,
While yet there's a poet to make thee his theme.

Nay more, may my Delia still give you her charms,
Each evening, and sometimes the whole evening long
Then, grotto, be proud to support her white arms,
Then, willow, wave all thy green tops to her song.

TO HYMEN.

Teach me, kind Hymen! teach—for thou
Must be my only tutor now—
Teach me some innocent employ
That shall the hateful thought destroy,
That I this whole long night must pass
In exile from my love's embrace.
Alas! thou hast no wings, oh Time!
It was some thoughtless lover's rhyme,
Who, writing in his Chloe's view,
Paid her the compliment through you;
For had he, if he truly loved,
But once the pangs of absence proved,
He'd cropt thy wings, and in their stead,
Have painted thee with heels of lead
But 'tis the temper of the mind,
Where we thy regulator find:
Still o'er the gay and o'er the young,
With unfelt steps you flit along;
As Virgil's nymph o'er ripen'd corn,
With such ethereal haste was borne,
That every stock with upright head
Denied the pressure of her tread;
But o'er the wretched, oh, how slow
And heavy sweeps thy scythe of woe!
Oppressed beneath each stroke they bow,
Thy course engraven on their brow.
A day of absence shall consume
The glow of youth, and manhood's bloom;

And one short night of anxious fear
Shall leave the wrinkles of a year.

For me, who, when I'm happy, owe
No thanks to fortune that I'm so;—
Who long have learned to look at one
Dear object, and at one alone,
For all the joy and all the sorrow
That gilds the day or threats the morrow;—
I never felt thy footsteps light,
But when sweet love did aid thy flight;
And, banish'd from his blest dominion,
I cared not for thy borrow'd pinion.

True, she is mine, and since she's mine,
At trifles I should not repine;
But oh! the miser's real pleasure
Is not in knowing he has treasure:
He must behold his golden store,
And feel and count his riches o'er.
Thus I, of one dear gem possess'd
And in that treasure only blest,
There every day would seek delight,
And clasp the casket every night.

DAMON TO DELIA.

Ask'st thou how long my love shall stay
When all that's new is past;
How long? Ah, Delia, can I say
How long my life will last?
Dry be that tear—be hush'd that sigh,
At least I'll love thee till I die.

And does that thought afflict thee too,
The thought of Damon's death;
That he who only lives for you
Must yield his faithful breath?
Hush'd be that sigh—be dried that tear,
Nor let us lose our Heaven here.

DELIA TO DAMON.*

Think'st thou, my Damon, I'd forego
This tender luxury of woe;

* The reply was written by Mrs. Sheridan.

Which better than the tongue imparts
The feelings of impassion'd hearts.
Blest if my sighs and tears but prove
The winds and waves that waft to love.

Can true affection cease to fear?
Poor is the joy, not worth a tear.
Did passion ever know content?
How weak the passion words can paint.
Then let my sighs and tears but prove
The winds and waves that waft to love.

The Cyprian bird with plaintive moan
Thus makes her faithful passion known.
So Zephyrus breathes on Flora's bowers,
And charms with sighs the Queen of flowers;
Then let my sighs and tears but prove
The winds and waves that waft to love.

EPILOGUE TO HANNAH MORE'S PLAY, THE FATAL FALSEHOOD.

SPOKEN BY MR. LEE LEWIS.

UNHAND me, gentlemen, by heaven, I say,
I'll make a ghost of him who bars my way.
(*Behind the scenes.*)
Forth let me come—a Poetaster true,
As lean as Envy, and as baneful too;
On the dull audience let me vent my rage,
Or drive these female scribblers from the stage:
For scene or history, we've none but these,
The law of Liberty and Wit they seize,
In Tragic—Comic—Pastoral—they dare to please.
Each puny bard must surely burst with spite,
To find that women with such fame can write:
But, oh, your partial favour is the cause,
Who feed their follies with such full applause;
Yet still our tribe shall seek to blast their fame,
And ridicule each fair pretender's aim;
Where the dull duties of domestic life,
Wage with the Muse's toils eternal strife.
What motley cares Corilla's mind perplex,
Whom maids and metaphors conspire to vex!

In studious déshabille behold her sit,
A letter'd gossip and a housewife wit;
At once invoking, though for different views,
Her gods, her cook, her milliner, and muse.
Round her strew'd room, a frippery chaos lies,
A chequer'd wreck of notable and wise.
Bills, books, caps, couplets, combs, a varied mass,
Oppress the toilet and obscure the glass;
Unfinished here an epigram is laid,
And there a mantua-maker's bill unpaid.
There new born plays foretaste the town's applause,
There dormant patterns pine for future gauze.
A moral essay now is all her care,
A satire next, and then a bill of fare.
A scene she now projects, and now a dish,
Here Act the first, and here "Remove with Fish."
Now, while this eye in a fine frenzy rolls,
That soberly casts up a bill for coals;
Black pins and daggers in one leaf she sticks,
And tears, and threads, and bowls, and thimbles mix.
Sappho, 'tis true long versed in epic song,
For years esteemed all household studies wrong;
When dire mishap, through neither shame nor sin,
Sappho herself, and not her Muse, lies in.
The virgin Nine in terror fly the bower,
And matron Juno claims despotic power;
Soon gothic hags the classic pile o'erturn,
A caudle-cup supplants the sacred urn,
Nor books nor implements escape their rage,
They spike the inkstand and they rend the page;
Poems and plays one barbarous fate partake,
Ovid and Plautus suffer at the stake,
And Aristotle's only saved—to wrap plumcake.
Yet, shall a woman tempt the tragic scene?
And dare—but hold—I must repress my spleen;
I see your hearts are pledged to her applause,
While Shakespeare's spirit seems to aid her cause;
Well pleased to aid—since o'er his sacred bier
A female hand did ample trophies rear,
And gave the greenest laurel that is worshipped there.

TO LAURA.

NEAR Avon's ridgy bank there grows
A willow of no vulgar size,
That tree first heard poor Silvio's woes,
And heard how bright were Laura's eyes.
Its boughs were shade from heat or show'r,
Its roots a moss-grown seat became;
Its leaves would strew the maiden's bow'r,
Its bark was shatter'd with her name!

Once on a blossom-crowned day
Of mirth-inspiring May
Silvio, beneath this willow's sober shade
In sullen contemplation laid,
Did mock the meadow's flowery pride,—
Rail'd at the dance and sportive ring;—
The tabor's call he did deride,
And said, *It was not Spring.*

He scorn'd the sky of azure blue,
He scorn'd whate'er could mirth bespeak;
He chid the beam that drank the dew,
And chid the gale that fann'd his glowing cheek.
Unpaid the season's wonted lay,
For still he sigh'd, and said it *was* not *May*.

"Ah, why should the glittering stream
Reflect thus delusive the scene?
Ah, why does a rosy-ting'd beam,
Thus vainly enamel the green?
To me nor joy nor light they bring,
I tell thee, Phœbus, *'tis not Spring.*

"Sweet tut'ress of music and love,
Sweet bird, if 'tis thee that I hear,
Why left you so early the grove,
To lavish your melody here?
Cease, then, mistaken thus to sing,
Sweet nightingale! it *is* not *Spring.*

"The gale courts my locks but to tease,
And, Zephyr, I call'd not on thee;
Thy fragrance no longer can please,
Then rob not the blossoms for me:
But hence unload thy balmy wing,
Believe me, Zephyr, 'tis *not Spring.*

"Yet the lily has drank of the show'r,
And the rose 'gins to peep on the day;
And yon bee seems to search for a flow'r,
As busy as if it were May:—
In vain, thou senseless flutt'ring thing,
My heart informs me, *'tis not Spring.*"

May pois'd her roseate wings, for she had heard
The mourner, as she passed the vales along;
And, silencing her own indignant bird,
She thus reprov'd poor Silvio's song.

"How false is the sight of a lover;
How ready his spleen to discover
What reason would never allow!
Why,—Silvio, my sunshine and showers,
My blossoms, my birds, and my flow'rs,
Were never more perfect than now.

"The water's reflection is true,
The green is enamell'd to view,
And Philomel sings on the spray;
The gale is the breathing of Spring,
'Tis fragrance it bears on its wing,
And the bee is assur'd it is *May.*"

"Pardon (said Silvio with a gushing tear),
'Tis Spring, sweet nymph, *but Laura is not here.*"

In sending these verses to Mrs. Sheridan, who was on a visit to her father and mother at Bath, Sheridan had also written her a description of some splendid party, at which he had lately been present, where all the finest women of the world of fashion were assembled. His praises of their beauty, as well as his account of their flattering attentions to himself, awakened a feeling of, at least, poetical jealousy in Mrs. Sheridan, which she expressed in the following answer to his verses—taking occasion, at the same time, to pay some generous compliments to the most brilliant among his new fashionable friends. Though her verses are of that kind which we read more with interest than admiration, they have quite enough of talent for the gentle themes to which she aspired; and there is, besides, a charm about them, as coming from Mrs. Sheridan, to which far better poetry could not pretend.

TO SILVIO.

Soft flow'd the lay by Avon's sedgy side,
While o'er its streams the drooping willow hung,
Beneath whose shadow Silvio fondly tried
To check the opening roses as they sprung.

In vain he bade them cease to court the gale,
That wanton'd balmy on the zephyr's wing;
In vain, when Philomel renew'd her tale,
He chid her song, and said, "*It was not Spring.*"

For still they bloom'd, though Silvio's heart was sad,
Nor did sweet Philomel neglect to sing;
The zephyrs scorn'd them not, though Silvio had,
For love and nature told them *it was Spring.*

* * * * * *

To other scenes doth Silvio now repair,
To nobler themes his daring Muse aspires;
Around him throng the gay, the young, the fair,
His lively wit the list'ning crowd admires.

And see, where radiant Beauty smiling stands,
With gentle voice and soft beseeching eyes,
To gain the laurel from his willing hands,
Her every art the fond enchantress tries.

What various charms the admiring youth surround,
How shall he sing, or how attempt to praise?
So lovely all—where shall the bard be found,
Who can to *one* alone attune his lays?

Behold with graceful step and smile serene,
Majestic Stella* moves to claim the prize;
"'Tis thine," he cries, "for thou art Beauty's queen."
Mistaken youth! and see'st thou Myra's† eyes?

With beaming lustre see they dart at thee;
Ah! dread their vengeance—yet withhold thy hand—
That deep'ning blush upbraids thy rash decree;
Hers is the wreath—obey the just demand.

* Mr. Moore says, according to the Key which had been given him, the name of Stella was meant to designate the Duchess of Rutland.
† The Duchess of Devonshire.

"Pardon, bright nymph," (the wond'ring Silvio cries,)
"And oh, receive the wreath, thy beauty's due"—
His voice awards what still his hand denies,
For beauteous Amoret* now his eyes pursue.

With gentle step and hesitating grace,
Unconscious of her power, the fair one came;
If, while he view'd the glories of that face,
Poor Sylvio doubted,—who shall dare to blame?

A rosy blush his ardent gaze reprov'd,
The offer'd wreath she modestly declined;—
"If sprightly wit and dimpled smiles are lov'd,
My brow," said Flavia,† "shall that garland bind."

With wanton gaiety the prize she seized—
Sylvio in vain her snowy hand repell'd;
The fickle youth unwillingly was pleas'd,
Reluctantly the wreath he yet withheld.

But Jessie's ‡ all-seducing form appears,
Nor more the playful Flavia could delight:
Lovely in smiles, more lovely still in tears,
Her every glance shone eloquently bright.

Those radiant eyes in safety none could view,
Did not those fringed lids their brightness shade—
Mistaken youths! their beams, too late ye knew,
Are by that soft defence more fatal made.

"O God of Love!" with transport Silvio cries,
"Assist me thou, this contest to decide;
And since to *one* I cannot yield the prize,
Permit thy slave the garland to divide.

"On Myra's breast the opening rose shall blow,
Reflecting from her cheek a livelier bloom;
For Stella shall the bright carnation glow—
Beneath her eyes' bright radiance meet its doom.

"Smart pinks and daffodils shall Flavia grace,
The modest eglantine and violet blue
On gentle Amoret's placid brow I'll place—
Of elegance and love an emblem true."

* Mrs. (afterwards Lady) Crewe.
† Lady Craven, afterwards Margravine of Anspach.
‡ The late Countess of Jersey.

In gardens oft a beauteous flow'r there grows,
By vulgar eyes unnotic'd and unseen;
In sweet security it humbly blows,
And rears its purple head to deck the green.

This flow'r, as nature's poet sweetly sings,
Was once milk-white, and *heart's ease* was it's name;
Till wanton Cupid pois'd his roseate wings,
A vestal's sacred bosom to inflame.

With treacherous aim the god his arrow drew,
Which she with icy coldness did repel;
Rebounding thence with feathery speed it flew,
Till on this lonely flow'r at last it fell.

Heart's ease no more the wandering shepherds found,
No more the nymphs its snowy form possess,
Its white now chang'd to purple by Love's wound,
Heart's ease no more, 'tis 'Love in Idleness.'

"This flow'r, with sweet-briar join'd, shall thee adorn,
Sweet Jessie, fairest 'mid ten thousand fair!
But guard thy gentle bosom from the thorn,
Which, though conceal'd, the sweet-brier still must bear

"And place not Love, though *idle*, in thy breast,
Though bright its hues, it boasts no other charm—
So may thy future days be ever blest,
And friendship's calmer joys thy bosom warm!"

But where does Laura pass her lonely hours?
Does she still haunt the grot and willow-tree?
Shall Silvio from his wreath of various flow'rs
Neglect to cull one simple sweet for thee?

"Ah Laura, no," the constant Silvio cries,
"For thee a never-fading wreath I'll twine,
Though bright the rose, its bloom too swiftly flies,
No emblem meet for love so true as mine.

For thee, my love, the myrtle, ever-green,
Shall every year its blossoms sweet disclose,
Which when our spring of youth no more is seen,
Shall still appear more lovely than the rose."

"Forgive, dear youth," the happy Laura said,
"Forgive each doubt, each fondly anxious fear
Which from my heart for ever now is fled—
Thy love and truth, thus tried, are doubly dear.
"With pain I mark'd the various passions rise,
When beauty so divine before thee mov'd;
With trembling doubt beheld thy wandering eyes,
For still I fear'd;—alas! because I lov'd.
"Each anxious doubt shall Laura *now* forego,
No more regret those joys so lately known,
Conscious that though thy breast to *all* may glow *
Thy faithful *heart* shall beat for *her* alone.
"Then, Silvio, seize again thy tuneful lyre,
Nor yet sweet Beauty's pow'r forbear to praise
Again let charms divine thy strains inspire,
And Laura's voice shall aid the poet's lays."

I NE'ER COULD ANY LUSTRE SEE.

"I NE'ER could any lustre see†
In eyes that would not look on me:
When a glance aversion hints,
I always think the lady squints.
I ne'er saw nectar on a lip,
But where my own did hope to sip.
No pearly teeth rejoice my view,
Unless a 'yes' displays their hue—
The prudish lip, that *noes* me back,
Convinces me the teeth are black.
To me the cheek displays no roses,
Like that th' assenting blush discloses;
But when with proud disdain 'tis spread,
To me 'tis but a scurvy red.
Would she have me praise her hair?
Let her place my garland there.
Is her hand so white and pure?
I must press it to be sure;
Nor can I be certain then,
Till it grateful press again.

* From these verses one of the songs in "The Duenna" was taken.
† Another mode of beginning this song in the MS. :—
"Go tell the maid who seeks to move
My lyre to praise, my heart to love,
No rose upon her cheek can live,
Like those assenting blushes give."

Must I praise her melody?
Let her sing of love and me.
If she choose another theme,
I'd rather hear a peacock scream,
Must I, with attentive eye,
Watch her heaving bosom sigh?
I will do so, when I see
That heaving bosom sigh for me
None but bigots will in vain
Adore a heav'n they cannot gain.
If I must religious prove
To the mighty God of Love,
Sure I am it is but fair
He, at least, should hear my prayer.
But, by each joy of his I've known,
And all I yet shall make my own,
Never will I, with humble speech,
Pray to a heav'n I cannot reach."

DRY BE THAT TEAR.

Dry be that tear, my gentlest love,
Be hush'd that struggling sigh,
Nor seasons, day, nor fate shall prove
More fix'd, more true than I.
Hush'd be that sigh, be dry that tear,
Cease boding doubt, cease anxious fear.—
Dry be that tear.

Ask'st thou how long my love will stay,
When all that's new is past?—
How long, ah, Delia, can I say
How long my life will last?
Dry be that tear, be hush'd that sigh,
At least I'll love thee till I die.—
Hush'd be that sigh.

And does that thought affect thee too,
The thought of Sylvio's death,
That he who only breath'd for you,
Must yield that faithful breath?
Hush'd be that sigh, be dry that tear,
Nor let us lose our Heaven here.—
Dry be that tear.

There is in the second stanza here a close resemblance to

one of the madrigals of Montreuil, a French poet, to whom Sir John Moore was indebted for the point of his well-known verses, "If in that breast, so good so pure."* Mr. Sheridan, however, knew nothing of French, and neglected every opportunity of learning it, till, by a very natural process, his ignorance of the language grew into hatred of it. Besides, we have the immediate source from which he derived the thought of this stanza, in one of the Essays of Hume, who, being a reader of foreign literature, most probably found it in Montreuil.†

TO THE RECORDING ANGEL.

CHERUB of heaven, that from thy secret stand
Dost note the follies of each mortal here,
Oh, if Eliza's steps employ thy hand,
Blot the sad legend with a mortal tear.
Nor, when she errs, through passion's wild extreme,
Mark then her course, nor heed each trifling wrong;
Nor when her sad attachment is her theme,
Note down the transports of her erring tongue.
But when she sighs for sorrows not her own,
Let that dear sigh to Mercy's cause be given;
And bear that tear to her Creator's throne,
Which glistens in the eye upraised to Heaven!

EXTRACTS FROM "CLIO'S REQUEST."

PUBLISHED IN 1771, DESCRIBING SEVERAL OF THE BEAUTIES OF BATH.

BUT, hark!—did not our bard repeat
The love-born name of M-rg-r-t?—‡

* "The grief, that on my quiet preys,
That rends my heart and checks my tongue,
I fear will last me all my days,
And feel it will not last me long."
It is thus in Montreuil:—
"C'est un mal que j'aurai tout le tems de ma vie;
Mais je ne l'aurai pas long-tems."

† Or in an Italian song of Menage, from which Montreuil, who was accustomed to such thefts, most probably stole it. The point in the Italian is, as far as I can remember it, expressed thus:—
"In van, o Filli, tu chiedi
Se lungamente durera l'ardore
* * * * *
Chi lo potrebbe dire?
Incerta, o Filli, e l'ora del morire."

‡ Lady Margaret Fordyce.

Attention seizes every ear;
We pant for the description *here:*
If ever dulness left thy brow,
"*Pindar*," we say, "'twill leave thee now."
But oh! old Dulness' son anointed
His mother never disappointed!—
And here we all were left to seek
A dimple in F-rd-ce's cheek!

And could you really discover,
In gazing those sweet beauties over,
No other charm, no winning grace,
Adorning either mind or face,
But one poor *dimple*, to express
The *quintessence* of *loveliness*?

....Mark'd you her cheek of rosy hue?
Mark'd you her eye of sparkling blue?
That eye, in liquid circles moving;
That cheek abash'd at Man's approving;
The *one*, Love's arrows darting round;
The *other*, blushing at the wound:
Did she not speak, did she not move,
Now *Pallas*—now the Queen of Love!

* * * * *

We see the Dame, in rustic pride,
A bunch of keys to grace her side,
Stalking across the well-swept entry,
To hold her council in the pantry;
Or, with prophetic soul, foretelling
The peas will boil well by the shelling;
Or, bustling in her private closet,
Prepare her lord his morning posset;
And while the hallow'd mixture thickens,
Signing death-warrants for the chickens:
Else, greatly pensive, poring o'er
Accounts her cook hath thumb'd before;
One eye cast up upon that *great book*,
Yclep'd *The Family Receipt Book*;
By which she's rul'd in all her courses,
From stewing figs to drenching horses.
—Then pans and pickling skillets rise,
In dreadful lustre, to our eyes,
With store of sweetmeats, rang'd in order,
And *potted nothings* on the border;

While salves and caudle-cups between,
With squalling children, close the scene.
* * * * *
O! should your genius ever rise,
And make you *Laureate* in the skies,
I'd hold my life, in twenty years,
You'd spoil the *music* of the *spheres*.
—Nay, should the rapture-breathing Nine
In one celestial concert join,
Their sovereign's power to rehearse,
—Were you to furnish men with verse,
By Jove, I'd fly the heavenly throng,
Tho' *Phœbus* play'd and *Linley* sung.

SHERIDAN'S *VERS DE SOCIETE.*

In what are called *Vers de Société*, or drawing-room verses, he took great delight; and there remain among his papers several sketches of these trifles. Mr. Moore once heard him repeat, in a ball-room, some verses which he had written on Waltzing, and of which he has given us the following :—

"With tranquil step, and timid downcast glance,
Behold the well-pair'd couple now advance.
In such sweet posture our first Parents mov'd,
While, hand in hand, through Eden's bowers they rov'd
Ere yet the Devil, with promise foul and false,
Turn'd their poor heads and taught them how to *Waltz*.
One hand grasps hers, the other holds her hip—
* * * * *
For so the Law's laid down by Baron Trip."*

He had a sort of hereditary fancy for difficult trifling in poetry;—particularly for that sort which consists in rhyming to the same word through a long string of couplets, till every rhyme that the language supplies for it is exhausted. The following are specimens from a poem of this kind, which he wrote on the loss of a lady's trunk :—

* This gentleman, whose name suits so aptly as a legal authority on the subject of Waltzing, was, at the time these verses were written, well known in the dancing circles.

My Trunk!

(*To Anne.*)

Have you heard, my dear Anne, how my spirits are sunk?
Have you heard of the cause? Oh, the loss of my *Trunk!*
For exertion or firmness I've never yet slunk;
But my fortitude's gone with the loss of my *Trunk!*
Stout Lucy, my maid, is a damsel of spunk;
Yet she weeps night and day for the loss of my *Trunk!*
I'd better turn nun, and coquet with a monk;
For with whom can I flirt without aid from my *Trunk?*

* * * * *

Accurs'd be the thief, the old rascally hunks,
Who rifles the fair, and lays hands on their *Trunks!*
He who robs the King's stores of the least bit of junk,
Is hang'd—while he's safe, who has plunder'd my *Trunk!*

* * * * *

There's a phrase amongst lawyers, when *nunc's* put for *tunc;*
But, tunc and nunc both, must I grieve for my *Trunk!*
Huge leaves of that great commentator, old Brunck,
Perhaps was the paper that lin'd my poor *Trunk!*
But my rhymes are all out!—for I dare not use st—k;*
'Twould shock Sheridan more than the loss of my *Trunk!*

From another of these trifles, (which, no doubt, produced much gaiety at the breakfast-table,) the following extracts will be sufficient:—

Muse, assist me to complain,
While I grieve for Lady *Jane.*
I ne'er was in so sad a vein,
Deserted now by Lady *Jane.*

* * * *

Lord Petre's house was built by Payne—
No mortal architect made *Jane.*
If hearts had windows, through the pane
Of mine you'd see sweet Lady *Jane.*

* * * *

At breakfast I could scarce refrain
From tears at missing lovely *Jane;*
Nine rolls I eat, in hopes to gain
The roll that might have fall'n to *Jane,* &c.

* He had a particular horror of this word.

Another, written on a Mr. *Bigg*, contains some ludicrous couplets:—

I own he's not fam'd for a reel or a jig,
Tom Sheridan there surpasses Tom *Bigg*.
For, lam'd in one thigh, he is obliged to go zig-
Zag, like a crab—so no dancer is *Bigg*.
Those who think him a coxcomb, or call him a prig,
How little they know of the mind of my *Bigg!*
Though he ne'er can be mine, Hope will catch a twig—
Two Deaths—and I yet may become Mrs. *Bigg*.
Oh give me, with him, but a cottage and pig,
And content I would live on Beans, Bacon, and *Bigg*.

A few more of these light productions remain among his papers, but their wit is gone with those for whom they were written; the wings of Time "eripuere *jocos*."

Of a very different description are the following striking and spirited fragments, written by him, apparently, about the year 1794, and addressed to Lord Howe and the other naval heroes of that period, to console them for the neglect they experienced from the Government, while ribands and titles were lavished on the Whig Seceders:—

Never mind them, brave black Dick,
Though they've played thee such a trick—
Damn their ribands and their garters,
Get you to your post and quarters.
Look upon the azure sea,
There's a Sailor's Taffety!
Mark the Zodiac's radiant bow,
That's a collar fit for HOWE!—
And, than P—tl—d's brighter far,
The Pole shall furnish you a Star?
Damn their ribands and their garters,
Get you to your post and quarters.
Think, on what things are ribands shower'd—
The two Sir Georges—Y—— and H——!
Look to what rubbish stars will stick,
To Dicky H——n and Johnny D——k!
Would it be for your country's good,
That you might pass for Alec. H——d,

Or, perhaps—and worse by half—
To be mistaken for Sir R——h!
Would you, like C——, pine with spleen,
Because your bit of silk was green?
Would you, like C——, change your side,
To have your silk new dipt and dyed?—
Like him, exclaim, 'My riband's hue
Was green—and now, by Heav'ns! 'tis blue!'
And, like him—stain your honour too!
Damn their ribands and their garters,
Get you to your post and quarters.
On the foes of Britain close,
While B——k garters his Dutch hose.
And cons, with spectacles on nose,
(While to battle *you* advance,)
His "*Honi soit qui mal y pense.*"

UNFINISHED PLAYS AND POEMS.

UNFINISHED PLAYS AND POEMS.

WHEN in his seventeenth year, Sheridan produced a dramatic sketch founded on the "Vicar of Wakefield," a scene of which will serve to show how early his talent for lively dialogue displayed itself:

SCENE II.

THORNHILL *and* ARNOLD.

Thornhill. Nay, prithee, Jack, no more of that if you love me. What, shall I stop short with the game in full view? Faith, I believe the fellow's turned puritan. What think you of turning methodist, Jack? You have a tolerable good canting countenance, and, if escaped being taken up for a Jesuit, you might make a fortune in Moorfields.

Arnold. I was serious, Tom.

Thorn. Splenetic, you mean. Come, fill your glass, and a truce to your preaching. Here's a pretty fellow has let his conscience sleep for these five years, and has now plucked morality from the leaves of his grandmother's Bible, beginning to declaim against what he has practised half his life-time. Why, I tell you once more, my schemes are all come to perfection. I, am now convinced Olivia loves me—at our last conversation, she said she would rely wholly on my honour.

Arn. And therefore you would deceive her.

Thorn. Why no—deceive her?—why—indeed—as to that—but—but, for God's sake, let me hear no more on this subject, for 'faith, you make me sad, Jack. If you continue your admonitions, I shall begin to think you have yourself an eye on the girl. You have promised me your assistance, and, when you came down into the country, were as hot on the scheme as myself: but, since you have been two or three times with me at Primrose's, you have fallen off strangely. No encroachments, Jack, on my little rosebud—if you have a mind to beat up game in this quarter, there's her sister—but no poaching.

Arn. I am not insensible to her sister's merit, but have no such views as you have. However, you have promised me that if you find in this lady that real virtue which you so firmly deny to exist in the sex, you will give up the pursuit, and, foregoing the low considerations of fortune, make atonement by marriage.

Thorn. Such is my serious resolution.

Arn. I wish you'd forego the experiment. But you have been so much in raptures with your success, that I have, as yet, had no clear account how you came acquainted in the family.

Thorn. Oh, I'll tell you immediately. You know Lady Patchet?

Arn. What, is she here?

Thorn. It was by her I was first introduced. It seems that, last year, her ladyship's reputation began to suffer a little; so that she thought it prudent to retire for a while, till people learned better manners or got worse memories. She soon became acquainted with this little family, and, as the wife is a prodigious admirer of quality, grew in a short time to be very intimate, and, imagining that she may one day make her market of the girls, has much ingratiated herself with them. She introduced me—I drank, and abused this degenerate age with the father—promised wonders to the mother for all her brats—praised her gooseberry wine, and ogled the daughters, by which means in three days I made the progress I related to you.

Arn. You have been expeditious indeed. I fear where that devil Lady Patchet is concerned there can be no good—but is there not a son?

Thorn. Oh! the most ridiculous creature in nature. He has been bred in the country a bumpkin all his life, till within these six years, when he was sent to the University, but the misfortunes that have reduced his father falling out, he is returned, the most ridiculous animal you ever saw, a conceited, disputing blockhead. So there is no great matter to fear from *his* penetration. But come, let us begone, and see this moral family, we shall meet them coming from the field, and you will see a man who was once in affluence, maintaining by hard labour a numerous family.

Arn. Oh! Thornhill, can you wish to add infamy to their poverty? [*Exeunt.*

There also remain among his papers some scenes of a drama, without a name,—written evidently in haste, and with scarcely

any correction,—the subject of which is so wild and unmanageable, that I should not have hesitated in referring it to the same early date, had not the introduction into one of the scenes of "Dry be that tear, be hush'd that sigh," proved it to have been produced after that pretty song was written.

The chief personages upon whom the story turns are a band of outlaws, who, under the name and disguise of *Devils*, have taken up their residence in a gloomy wood, adjoining a village, the inhabitants of which they keep in perpetual alarm by their incursions and apparitions. In the same wood resides a hermit, secretly connected with this band, who keeps secluded within his cave the beautiful Reginilla, hid alike from the light of the sun and the eyes of men. She has, however, been indulged in her prison with a glimpse of a handsome young huntsman, whom she believes to be a phantom, and is encouraged in her belief by the hermit, by whose contrivance this huntsman (a prince in disguise) has been thus presented to her. The following is the scene that takes place between the fair recluse and her visitant. The style, where style is attempted, shows, as the reader will perceive, a taste yet immature and unchastened :—

Scene draws, and discovers REGINILLA *asleep in the Cave.*
Enter PEVIDOR *and other Devils, with the* HUNTSMAN—*unbind him, and exeunt.*

Hunts. Ha! Where am I now? Is it indeed the dread abode of guilt, or refuge of a band of thieves? it cannot be a dream. (*Sees* REGINILLA.) Ha! if this be so, and I *do* dream, may I never wake—it is—my beating heart acknowledges my dear, gentle Reginilla. I'll not wake her, lest, if it be a phantom, it should vanish. Oh, balmy breath! but for thy soft sighs that come to tell me it is no image, I should believe . . . . (*bends down towards her*) a sigh from her heart!—thus let me arrest thee on thy way (*kisses her.*) A deeper blush has flushed her cheek—sweet modesty! that even in sleep is conscious and resentful.—She will not wake, and yet some fancy calls up those frequent sighs—how her heart beats in its ivory cage, like an imprisoned bird—or as if to reprove the hand that dares approach its sanctuary! Oh, would she but wake,

and bless this gloom with her bright eyes!—Soft, here's a lute—perhaps her soul will hear the call of harmony.

Oh yield, fair lids, the treasures of my heart,
Release those beams, that make this mansion bright;
From her sweet sense, Slumber! though sweet thou art,
Begone, and give the air she breathes in light.

Or while, oh Sleep, thou dost those glances hide,
Let rosy slumbers still around her play,
Sweet as the cherub Innocence enjoy'd,
When in thy lap, new-born, in smiles he lay.

And thou, oh Dream, that com'st her sleep to cheer,
Oh take my shape, and play a lover's part;
Kiss her from me, and whisper in her ear,
Till her eyes shine, 'tis night within my heart.*

Reg. [*Waking.*] The phantom, father! [*Seizes his hand.*] Ah, do not, do not wake me then. [*Rises.*

Hunts. [*Kneeling to her.*] Thou beauteous sun of this dark world, that mak'st a place, so like the cave of death, a heaven to me, instruct me how I may approach thee—how address thee and not offend.

Reg. Oh how my soul would hang upon those lips! speak on—and yet, methinks he should not kneel so—why are you afraid, sir? indeed, I cannot hurt you.

* Mr. Moore says that he has taken the liberty here of supplying a few rhymes and words that are wanting in the original copy of the song. The last line of all runs thus in the manuscript:

Till her eye shines I live in darkest night,

which, not rhyming as it ought, he has ventured to alter as above; and a correspondent in "Notes and Queries," No. 103, remarks: "The following sonnet, which occurs in the third book of Sir Philip Sidney's 'Arcadia,' is evidently the source whence Sheridan drew his inspiration, *the concluding line in both poems being the same.* Had Moore given Sheridan without alteration, the resemblance would, in all probability, be found much closer."

Look up, faire liddes, the treasure of my heart,
Preserve those beames, this ages only light;
To her sweet sence, sweet sleeepe, some ease impart,
Her sence too weake to beare her spirits might.
And while, O Sleepe, thou closest up her sight,
(Her sight, where Love did forge this fairest dart)
O harbour all her parts in easefull plight:
Let no strange dreame make her faire body start.
But yet, O dreame, if thou wilt not depart,
In this rare subject from thy common right;
But while thyself in such a seate delight,
Then take my shape, and play a lover's part;
Kiss her from me, and say unto her sprite
Till her eyes shine, I live in darkest night.

Hunts. Sweet innocence, I'm sure thou would'st not.

Reg. Art thou not he to whom I told my name, and didst thou not say thine was——

Hunts. Oh blessed be the name that then thou told'st—it has been ever since my charm, and kept me from distraction. But, may I ask how such sweet excellence as thine could be hid in such a place?

Reg. Alas, I know not—for such as thou I never saw before, nor any like myself.

Hunts. Nor like thee ever shall. But would'st thou leave this place, and live with me as I am?

Reg. Why may not you live here with such as I?

Hunts. Yes—but I would carry thee where all above an azure canopy extends, at night bedropt with gems, and one more glorious lamp, that yields such bashful light as love enjoys —while underneath, a carpet shall be spread of flowers to court the pressure of thy step, with such sweet whispered invitations from the leaves of shady groves or murmuring of silver streams, that thou shalt think thou are in Paradise.

Reg. Indeed!

Hunts. Ay, and I'll watch and wait on thee all day, and cull the choicest flowers, which while thou bind'st in the mysterious knot of love, I'll tune for thee no vulgar lays, but tell thee tales to make thee weep yet please thee — while thus I press thy hand, and warm it thus with kisses.

Reg. I doubt thee not; but then my Governor has told me many a tale of faithless men who court a lady but to steal her peace and fame, and then to leave her.

Hunts. Oh never such as thou art—witness all . . .

Reg. Then wherefore could'st thou not live here? For I do feel, though tenfold darkness did surround this spot, I could be blest, would you but stay here; and, if it made you sad to be imprison'd thus, I'd sing and play for thee, and dress thee sweetest fruits, and, though you chid me, would kiss thy tear away and hide my blushing face upon thy bosom—indeed I would. Then what avails the gaudy day, and all the evil things I'm told inhabit there, to those who have within themselves all that delight and love, and heaven can give?

Hunts. My angel, thou hast indeed the soul of love.

Reg. It is no ill thing, is it?

Hunts. Oh most divine—it is the immediate gift of heaven, which steals into our breast * *

* * * * *

'tis that which makes me sigh thus, look thus—fear and tremble for thee.

Reg. Sure I should learn it too, if you would teach me.

[*Sound of horn without*—HUNTSMAN *starts.*

Reg. You must not go—this is but a dance preparing for my amusement—oh we have, indeed, some pleasure here—come, I will sing for you the while.

Song.

Wilt thou then leave me? canst thou go from me,
To woo the fair that love the gaudy day?
Yet, e'en among those joys, thou'lt find that she,
Who dwells in darkness loves thee more than they.
For these poor hands, and these unpractised eyes,
And this poor heart is thine without disguise.

But, if thou'lt stay with me, my only care
Shall be to please and make thee love to stay
With music, song, and dance
* * * * * *
But, if you go, nor music, song, nor dance,
* * * * * *

If thou art studious, I will read
Thee tales of pleasing woe—
If thou art sad, I'd kiss away
The tears . . . . . that flow.

If thou wouldst play, I'd kiss thee till I blush,
Then hide that blush upon thy breast,
If thou wouldst sleep . . . . . .
Shall rock thy aching head to rest.

Hunts. My soul's wonder, I will never leave thee.

(*The Dance.—Allemande by two Bears.*)

Enter PEVIDOR.

Pev. So fond, so soon! I cannot bear to see it. What ho, within, [DEVILS *enter*] secure him.

[*Seize and bind the* HUNTSMAN.

The duke or sovereign of the country, where these events are supposed to take place, arrives at the head of a military force, for the purpose of investing the haunted wood, and putting down, as he says, those "lawless renegades, who, in infernal masquerade, make a hell around him." He is also desirous of consulting the holy hermit of the wood, and availing himself of his pious consolations and prayers—being haunted with remorse for having criminally gained possession of the crown by con-

triving the shipwreck of the rightful heir, and then banishing from the court his most virtuous counsellors. In addition to these causes of disquietude, he has lately lost, in a mysterious manner, his only son, who, he supposes, has fallen a victim to these Satanic outlaws, but who, on the contrary, it appears, has voluntarily become an associate of their band, and is amusing himself, heedless of his noble father's sorrow, by making love, in the disguise of a dancing bear, to a young village coquette of the name of Mopsa. A short specimen of the manner in which this last farcical incident is managed, will show how wide even Sheridan was, at first, of that true vein of comedy, which, on searching deeper into the mine, he so soon afterwards found:—

SCENE.—*The Inside of the Cottage.*—MOPSA, LUBIN (*her father*), *and* COLIN (*her lover*), *discovered.*

Enter PEVIDOR, *leading the Bear, and singing.*

"And he dances, dances, dances,
And goes upright like a Christian swain,
And he shows you pretty fancies,
Nor ever tries to shake off his chain."

Lubin. Servant, master. Now, Mopsa, you are happy—it is, indeed, a handsome creature. What country does your bear come from?

Pev. Dis bear, please your worship, is of de race of dat bear of St. Anthony, who was de first convert he made in de woods. St. Anthony bade him never more meddle with man, and de bear observed de command to his dying day.

Lub. Wonderful!

Pev. Dis generation be all de same—all born widout toots.

Colin. What, can't he bite? (*puts his finger to the Bear's mouth, who bites him.*) Oh Lord, no toots! why you——

Pev. Oh, dat be only his gum. [*Mopsa laughs.*

Col. For shame, Mopsa—now, I say, Maister Lubin, mustn't she give me a kiss to make it well?

Lub. Ay, kiss her, kiss her, Colin.

Col. Come, Miss. [*Mopsa runs to the Bear, who kisses her.*

The following scene of the Devils, drinking in their subterraneous dwelling, though cleverly imagined, is such as, perhaps, no cookery of style could render palatable to an English audience.

SCENE.—*The Devil's Cave.*

1st Dev. Come, Urial, here's to our resurrection.

2nd Dev. It is a toast I'd scarcely pledge—by my life, I think we're happier here.

3rd Dev. Why, so think I—by Jove, I would despise the man who could but wish to rise again to earth, unless we were to lord there. What! sneaking pitiful in bondage, among vile money-scrapers, treacherous friends, fawning flatterers—or, still worse, deceitful mistresses! Shall we, who reign lords here, again lend ourselves to swell the train of tyranny and usurpation? By my old father's memory, I'd rather be the blindest mole that ever skulked in darkness, the lord of one poor hole where he might say "I'm master here."

2nd Dev. You are too hot—where shall concord be found, if even the devils disagree?—Come, fill the glass, and add thy harmony—while we have wine to enlighten us, the sun be hanged! I never thought he gave so fine a light, for my part—and then, there are such vile inconveniences—high winds and storms, rains, &c.—oh, hang it! living on the outside of the earth is like sleeping on deck, when one might, like us, have a snug berth in the cabin.

1st Dev. True, true,—Helial, where is thy catch?

"In the earth's centre let me live,
There, like a rabbit will I thrive,
Nor care if fools should call my life infernal:
While men on earth crawl lazily about,
Like snails upon the surface of the nut,
We are, like maggots, feasting in the kernel."

1st Dev. Bravo, by this glass! Meli, what say you?

3rd Dev. Come, here's to my Mina—I used to toast her in the upper regions.

1st Dev. Ay, we miss them here.

Glee.

What's a woman good for?
Rat me, sir, if I know.
* * * * *

She's a savour to the glass,*
An excuse to make it pass.
* * * * *

1st Dev. I fear we are like the wits above, who abuse women

* Evidently the germ of the song, Here's to the maiden of bashful fifteen.

only because they can't get them,—and, after all, it must be owned they are a pretty kind of creatures.

All. Yes, yes.

Catch.

'Tis woman after all
Is the blessing of this ball,
'Tis she keeps the balance of it even.
We are devils, it is true,
But had we women too,
Our Tartarus would turn to a Heaven!

A scene in the third act, where these devils bring the prisoners whom they have captured to trial, is an overcharged imitation of the satire of Fielding, and was probably written after a perusal of that author's satirical romance, "A Journey from this World to the Next,"—the first half of which contains as much genuine humour and fancy as are to be found in any other production of the kind.

Enter a number of Devils.—Others bring in LUDOVICO.

1st Dev. Just taken, in the wood, sir, with two more.

Chorus of Devils.

Welcome, welcome * *
* * * * * *

Pev. What art thou?

Ludov. I went for a man in the other world.

Pev. What sort of man?

Ludov. A soldier, at your service.

Pev. Wast thou in the battle of ——?

Ludov. Truly I was.

Pev. What was the quarrel?

Ludov. I never had time to ask. The children of peace, who make our quarrels, must be Your Worship's informants there.

Pev. And art thou not ashamed to draw the sword for thou know'st not what—and to be the victim and food of others folly?

Ludov. Vastly.

Pev. (*to the Devils.*) Well, take him for to-day, and only score his skin and pepper it with powder—then chain him to a cannon, and let the Devils practise at his head—his be the reward who hits it with a single ball.

Ladies. Oh, mercy, mercy!

Pev. Bring Savodi.

(*A Devil brings in* SAVODI.)

Chorus as before.

Welcome, welcome, &c.

Pev. Who art thou?

Sav. A courtier, at Your Grace's service.

Pev. Your name?

Sav. Savodi, an' please Your Highnesses.

Pev. Your use?

Sav. A foolish utensil of state—a clock kept in the waiting-chamber, to count the hours.

Pev. Are you not one of those who fawn and lie, and cringe like spaniels to those a little higher, and take revenge by tyranny on all beneath?

Sav. Most true, Your Highnesses.

Pev. Is't not thy trade to promise what thou canst not do,—to gull the credulous of money, to shut the royal door on unassuming merit—to catch the scandal for thy master's ear, and stop the people's voice. . . . . .

Sav. Exactly, an' please Your Highnesses' Worships.

Pev. Thou dost not now deny it?

Sav. Oh no, no, no.

Pev. Here—baths of flaming sulphur!—quick—stir up the cauldron of boiling lead—this crime deserves it.

1st Dev. Great Judge of this infernal place, allow him but the mercy of the court.

Sav. Oh kind devil!—yes, Great Judge, allow.

1st Dev. The punishment is undergone already—truth from him is something.

Sav. Oh, most unusual—sweet Devil!

1st Dev. Then, he is tender, and might not be able to endure—

Sav. Endure! I shall be annihilated by the thoughts of it—dear Devil.

1st Dev. Then let him, I beseech you, in scalding brimstone be first soaked a little, to inure and prepare him for the other.

Sav. Oh hear me, hear me.

Pev. Well, be it so.

(*Devils take him out and bring in* PAMPHILUS.)

Pev. This is he we rescued from the ladies—a dainty one, I warrant.

Pamphil. (*affectedly.*) This is hell certainly by the smell.

Pev. What, art thou a soldier too?

Pamphil. No, on my life—a colonel, but no soldier—innocent even of a review, as I exist.

Pev. How rose you then? come, come—the truth.

Pamphil. Nay, be not angry, sir—if I was preferred it was not my fault—upon my soul, I never did anything to incur preferment.

Pev. Indeed! what was thy employment then, friend?

Pamphil. Hunting—

Pev. 'Tis false.

Pamphil. Hunting women's reputations.

Pev. What, thou wert amorous?

Pamphil. No, on my honour, sir, but vain, confounded vain—the character of bringing down my game was all I wished, and, like a true sportsman, I would have given my birds to my pointers.

Pev. This crime is new—what shall we do with him? &c., &c.

This singular drama does not appear to have been ever finished. With respect to the winding up of the story, the hermit, we may conclude, would have turned out to be the banished counsellor, and the devils, his followers; while the young huntsman would most probably have proved to be the rightful heir of the dukedom.

In a more crude and unfinished state are the fragments that remain of his projected opera, "The Foresters." To this piece (which appears to have been undertaken at a later period than the preceding one), Mr. Sheridan often alluded in conversation—particularly when any regret was expressed at his having ceased to assist Old Drury with his pen,—"Wait," (he would say smiling) "till I bring out my Foresters." The plot, as far as can be judged from the few meagre scenes that exist, was intended to be an improvement upon that of the drama just described—the Devils being transformed into Foresters, and the action commencing, not with the loss of a son but the recovery of a daughter, who had fallen by accident into the hands of these freebooters. At the opening of the piece the young lady has just been restored to her father by the heroic Captain of the Foresters, with no other loss than that of her

heart, which she is suspected of having left with her preserver. The list of the dramatis personæ (to which however he did not afterwards adhere) is as follows :—

Old Oscar.
Young Oscar.
Colona.
Morven.
Harold.
Nico.
Miza.
Malvina.
Allanda.
Dorcas.
Emma.

To this strange medley of nomenclature is appended a memorandum—"*Vide* Petrarch for names."

The first scene represents the numerous lovers of Malvina rejoicing at her return, and celebrating it by a chorus ; after which, Oscar, her father, holds the following dialogue with one of them :—

Oscar. I thought, son, you would have been among the first and most eager to see Malvina upon her return.

Colin. Oh, father, I would give half my flock to think that my presence would be welcome to her.

Osc. I am sure you have never seen her prefer any one else.

Col. There's the torment of it—were I but once sure that she loved another better, I think I should be content—at least she should not know but that I was so. My love is not of that jealous sort that I should pine to see her happy with another—nay, I could even regard the man that would make her so.

Osc. Haven't you spoke with her since her return ?

Col. Yes, and I think she is colder to me than ever. My professions of love used formerly to make her laugh, but now they make her weep—formerly she seemed wholly insensible; now, alas ! she seems to feel—but as if addressed by the wrong person. &c., &c.

In a following scene are introduced two brothers, both equally enamoured of the fair Malvina, yet preserving their affection unaltered towards each other. With the recollection of Sheridan's

own story fresh in our minds, we might suppose that he meant some reference to it in this incident, were it not for the exceeding *niaiserie* that he has thrown into the dialogue. For instance :—

Osc. But we are interrupted—here are two more of her lovers—brothers, and rivals, but friends.

Enter NICO *and* LUBIN.

So, Nico—how comes it you are so late in your inquiries after your mistress?

Nic. I should have been sooner; but Lubin would stay to make himself fine—though he knows he has no chance of appearing so to Malvina.

Lub. No, in truth—Nico says right—I have no more chance than himself.

Osc. However, I am glad to see you reconciled, and that you live together, as brothers should do.

Nic. Yes, ever since we found your daughter cared for neither of us, we grew to care for one another. There is a fellowship in adversity that is consoling; and it is something to think that Lubin is as unfortunate as myself.

Lub. Yes, we are well matched—I think Malvina dislikes him, if possible, more than me, and that's a great comfort.

Nic. We often sit together, and play such woful tunes on our pipes, that the very sheep are moved at it.

Osc. But why don't you rouse yourselves, and since you can meet with no requital of your passion, return the proud maid scorn for scorn.

Nic. Oh, mercy, no—we find a great comfort in our sorrow —don't we, Lubin?

Lub. Yes, if I meet no crosses, I shall be undone in another twelvemonth—I let all go to wreck and ruin.

Osc. But suppose Malvina should be brought to give you encouragement.

Nic. Heaven forbid! that would spoil all.

Lub. Truly I was almost assured within this fortnight that she was going to relax.

Nic. Ay, I shall never forget how alarmed we were at the appearance of a smile one day, &c., &c.

Of the poetical part of this opera, the only specimens he has left are a skeleton of a chorus, beginning "Bold Foresters we are," and the following song, which, for grace and tender-

ness, is not unworthy of the hand that produced The Duenna :—

We two, each other's only pride,
Each other's bliss, each other's guide,
Far from the world's unhallow'd noise,
Its coarse delights and tainted joys,
Through wilds will roam and deserts rude—
For, Love, thy home is solitude.

There shall no vain pretender be,
To court thy smile and torture me,
No proud superior there be seen,
But nature's voice shall hail thee, queen.

With fond respect and tender awe,
I will receive thy gentle law,
Obey thy looks, and serve thee still,
Prevent thy wish, foresee thy will,
And, added to a lover's care,
Be all that friends and parents are.

But of all Mr. Sheridan's unfinished designs, the Comedy which he meditated on the subject of Affectation is that of which the abandonment is most to be regretted. To a satirist, who would not confine his ridicule to the mere outward demonstrations of this folly, but would follow and detect it through all its windings and disguises, there could hardly perhaps be a more fertile theme. Affectation, merely of *manner*, being itself a sort of acting, does not easily admit of any additional colouring on the stage, without degenerating into farce; and accordingly, fops and fine ladies—with very few exceptions—are about as silly and tiresome in representation as in reality. But the aim of the dramatist, in this comedy, would have been far more important and extensive;—and how anxious he was to keep before his mind's eye the whole wide horizon of folly which his subject opened upon him, will appear from the following list of the various species of Affectation, which were written by him on the inside cover of the memorandum-book, that contains the only remaining vestiges of this play :—

An Affectation of Business.
of Accomplishments.
of Love of Letters and Wit.
Music.
of Intrigue.
of Sensibility.
of Vivacity.
of Silence and Importance.
of Modesty.
of Profligacy.
of Moroseness.

In this projected comedy he does not seem to have advanced as far as even the invention of the plot, or the composition of a single scene. The memorandum-book alluded to—on the first leaf of which he had written in his neatest hand (as if to encourage himself to begin) "Affectation" — contains, besides the names of three of the intended personages, Sir Babble Bore, Sir Peregrine Paradox, and Feignwit, nothing but unembodied sketches of character, and scattered particles of wit, which seem waiting, like the imperfect forms and seeds in chaos, for the brooding of genius to nurse them into system and beauty.

These curious notes show that in this work, as well as in The School for Scandal, he was desirous of making the vintage of his wit as rich as possible; by distilling into it every drop that the collected fruits of his thought and fancy could supply. Some of the jests are far-fetched, and others, perhaps, abortive —but it is pleasant to track him in his pursuit of a point, even when he misses. The very failures of a man of real wit are often more delightful than the best successes of others—the quicksilver, even in escaping from his grasp shines; "it still eludes him, but it glitters still."

Mr. Moore has given these notes as he found them with no other difference than that of classing together those that have relation to the same thought or subject.

Character.—MR. BUSTLE.

A man who delights in hurry and interruption—will take

any one's business for them—leaves word where all his plagues may follow him—governor of all hospitals, &c.—share in Ranelagh—speaker everywhere, from the Vestry to the House of Commons—I am not at home—gad, now he has heard me and I must be at home.—Here am I so plagued, and there is nothing I love so much as retirement and quiet.—You never sent after me.—Let servants call in to him such a message as "'Tis nothing but the window-tax," he hiding in a room that communicates.—A young man tells him some important business in the middle of fifty trivial interruptions, and the calling in of idlers; such as fiddlers, wild-beast men, foreigners with recommendatory letters, &c.—answers notes on his knee, "and so your uncle died?—for your obliging inquiries—and left you an orphan—to cards in the evening."

Can't bear to be doing nothing.—Can I do anything for anybody anywhere?—Have been to the Secretary—written to the Treasury.—Must proceed to meet the Commissioners, and write Mr. Price's little boy's exercise.—The most active idler and laborious trifler.

He does not in reality love business—only the appearance of it. Ha! ha! did my Lord say that I was always very busy?—What, plagued to death?

Keep all his letters and copies—Mem. To meet the Hackney-coach Commissioners—to arbitrate between, &c., &c.

Contrast with the man of indolence, his brother.—So, brother, just up! and I have been, &c., &c.—one will give his money from indolent generosity, the other his time from restlessness—'Twill be shorter to pay the bill than look for the receipt—Files letters, answered and unanswered—Why, here are more unopened than answered!

He regulates every action by a love for fashion—will grant annuities though he doesn't want money—appear to intrigue though constant; to drink, though sober—has some fashionable vices—affects to be distressed in his circumstances, and, when his new vis-à-vis comes out, procures a judgment to be entered against him—wants to lose, but by ill-luck wins five thousand pounds.

One who changes sides in all arguments the moment any one agrees with him.

An irresolute arguer, to whom it is a great misfortune that there are not three sides to a question—a libertine in argument;

conviction, like enjoyment, palls him, and his rakish understanding is soon satiated with truth—more capable of being faithful to a paradox—"I love truth as I do my wife; but sophistry and paradoxes are my mistresses—I have a strong domestic respect for her, but for the other the passion due to a mistress."

One, who agrees with every one, for the pleasure of speaking their sentiments for them—so fond of talking that he does not contradict only because he can't wait to hear people out.

A tripping casuist, who veers by others' breath, and gets on to information by tacking between the two sides—like a hoy, not made to go straight before the wind.

The more he talks, the farther he is off the argument, like a bowl on a wrong bias.

What are the affectations you chiefly dislike?

There are many in this company, so I'll mention others.—To see two people affecting intrigue, having their assignations in public places only; he, affecting a warm pursuit, and the lady, acting the hesitation of retreating virtue—Pray, ma'am, don't you think, &c.—while neither party have words between 'em to conduct the preliminaries of gallantry, nor passion to pursue the object of it.

A plan of public flirtation—not to get beyond a profile.

Then I hate to see one, to whom heaven has given real beauty, settling her features at the glass of fashion, while she speaks—not thinking so much of what she says as how she looks, and more careful of the action of her lips than of what shall come from them.

A pretty woman studying looks and endeavouring to recollect an ogle, like Lady——, who has learned to play her eyelids like Venetian blinds.*

An old woman endeavouring to put herself back to a girl.

A true trained wit lays his plan like a general—foresees the circumstances of the conversation—surveys the ground and contingencies—detaches a question to draw you into the palpable ambuscade of his ready-made joke.

* This simile is repeated in various shapes through his manuscripts—"She moves her eyes up and down like Venetian blinds"—"Her eyelids play like a Venetian blind," &c., &c.

A man intriguing, only for the reputation of it—to his confidential servant: "Who am I in love with now?"—"The newspapers give you so and so—you are laying close siege to Lady L. in 'The Morning Post,' and have succeeded with Lady G. in 'The Herald'—Sir F. is very jealous of you in 'The Gazetteer.'"—"Remember to-morrow, the first thing you do, to put me in love with Mrs. C."

"I forgot to forget the billet-doux at Brooks's."—"By-the-by, an't I in love with you?"—"Lady L. has promised to meet me in her carriage to-morrow; where is the most public place?"

"You were rude to her!"—"Oh no, upon my soul, I made love to her directly."

An old man, who affects intrigue, and writes his own reproaches in "The Morning Post," trying to scandalize himself into the reputation of being young, as if he could obscure his age by blotting his character, though never so little candid as when he's abusing himself.

"Shall you be at Lady ——'s? I'm told the Bramin is to be there, and the new French philosopher."—"No; it will be pleasanter at Lady ——'s conversazione; the cow with two heads will be there."

"I shall order my valet to shoot me the very first thing he does in the morning."

"You are yourself affected and don't know it; you would pass for morose."

He merely wanted to be singular, and happened to find the character of moroseness unoccupied in the society he lived with.

He certainly has a great deal of fancy and a very good memory; but with a perverse ingenuity he employs these qualities as no other person does—for he employs his fancy in his narratives, and keeps his recollections for his wit: when he makes his jokes you applaud the accuracy of his memory, and 'tis only when he states his facts, that you admire the flights of his imagination.*

* This idea Sheridan has used in several forms; once at the expense of Michael Kelly, the composer, who became a wine-merchant. "You will," observed the wit, "import your music and compose your wines." Again in the House of Commons Mr. Dundas was stigmatized as the gentleman "who generally resorts to his memory for his jokes, and to his imagination for his facts."

A fat woman trundling into a room on castors—in sitting can only lean against her chair—rings on her fingers, and her fat arms strangled with bracelets, which belt them like corded brawn—rolling and heaving when she laughs with the rattles in her throat, and a most apoplectic ogle—you wish to draw her out, as you would an opera-glass.

A long lean man, with all his limbs rambling—no way to reduce him to compass, unless you could double him like a pocket-rule—with his arms spread, he'd die on the bed of Ware like a cross on a Good Friday bun—standing still, he is a pilaster without a base—he appears rolled out or run up against a wall—so thin, that his front face is but the moiety of a profile—if he stands cross-legged, he looks like a caduceus, and put him in a fencing attitude, you would take him for a piece of chevaux-de-frise—to make any use of him, it must be as a spontoon or a fishing-rod—when his wife's by, he follows like a note of admiration—see them together, one's a mast, and the other all hulk—she's a dome and he's built like a glass-house—when they part, you wonder to see the steeple separate from the chancel, and were they to embrace, he must hang round her neck like a skein of thread on a lace-maker's bolster—to sing her praise you should choose a rondeau, and to celebrate him you must write all Alexandrines.

I wouldn't give a pin to make fine men in love with me—every coquette can do that, and the pain you give these creatures is very trifling. I love out-of-the-way conquests; and as I think my attractions are singular, I would draw singular objects.

The loadstone of true beauty draws the heaviest substances—not like the fat dowager, who frets herself into warmth to get the notice of a few papier mâché fops as you rub Dutch sealing-wax to draw paper.

If I were inclined to flatter I would say that, as you are unlike other women, you ought not to be won as they are. Every woman can be gained by time, therefore you ought to be by a sudden impulse. Sighs, devotion, attention, weigh with others; but they are so much your due that no one should claim merit from them. . . . . .

You should not be swayed by common motives—how heroic to form a marriage for which no human being can guess the inducement—what a glorious unaccountableness! all the world will wonder what the devil you could see in me; and, if you

should doubt your singularity, I pledge myself to you that I never yet was endured by women; so that I should owe everything to the effect of your bounty, and not by my own superfluous deserts make it a debt, and so lessen both the obligation and my gratitude. In short, every other woman follows her inclination, but you, above all things, should take me, if you do not like me. You will, besides, have the satisfaction of knowing that we are decidedly the worst match in the kingdom—a match, too. that must be all your own work, in which fate could have no hand, and which no foresight could foresee.

A lady who affects poetry.—"I made regular approaches to her by sonnets and rebusses—a rondeau of circumvallation—her pride sapped by an elegy, and her reserve surprised by an impromptu—proceeding to storm with Pindarics, she, at last, saved the further effusion of ink by a capitulation."

Her prudish frowns and resentful looks are as ridiculous as 'twould be to see a board with notice of spring-guns set in a highway, or of steel-traps in a common; because they imply an insinuation that there is something worth plundering where one would not, in the least, suspect it.

The expression of her face is at once a denial of all love-suit, and a confession that she never was asked—the sourness of it arises not so much from her aversion to the passion, as from her never having had an opportunity to show it.—Her features are so unfortunately formed that she could never dissemble or put on sweetness enough to induce any one to give her occasion to show her bitterness.—I never saw a woman to whom you would more readily give credit for perfect chastity.

Lady Clio. "What am I reading?—have I drawn nothing lately?—is the work-bag finished?—how accomplished I am!—has the man been to untune the harpischord?—does it look as if I had been playing on it?"

"Shall I be ill to-day?—shall I be nervous?"—"Your La'ship was nervous yesterday."—"Was I?—then I'll have a cold—I haven't had a cold this fortnight—a cold is becoming—no—I'll not have a cough; that's fatiguing—I'll be quite well."—"You become sickness—your La'ship always looks vastly well when you're ill."

"Leave the book half read and the rose half finished—you know I love to be caught in the fact."

One who knows that no credit is ever given to his assertions has the more right to contradict his words.

He goes the western circuit, to pick up small fees and impudence.

A new wooden leg for Sir Charles Easy.

An ornament which proud peers wear all the year round—chimney-sweepers only on the first of May.

In marriage if you possess anything very good, it makes you eager to get everything else good of the same sort.

The critic when he gets out of his carriage should always recollect, that his footman behind is gone up to judge as well as himself.

She might have escaped in her own clothes, but, I suppose, she thought it more romantic to put on her brother's regimentals.

Moore says, "The rough sketches and fragments of poems, which Mr. Sheridan left behind him, are numerous; but those among them that are sufficiently finished to be cited, bear the marks of having been written when he was very young, and would not much interest the reader—while of the rest it is difficult to find four consecutive lines, that have undergone enough of the *toilette* of composition to be presentable in print. It was his usual practice, when he undertook any subject in verse, to write down his thoughts first in a sort of poetical prose, with, here and there, a rhyme or a metrical line, as they might occur—and then afterwards to reduce, with much labour, this anomalous compound to regular poetry. The birth of his prose being, as we have already seen, so difficult, it may be imagined how painful was the travail of his verse. Indeed, the number of tasks which he left unfinished are all so many proofs of that despair of perfection, which those best qualified to attain it are always the most likely to feel."

There are some fragments of an Epilogue, apparently intended to be spoken in the character of a woman of fashion, which give a lively notion of what the poem would have been

when complete. The high carriages, that had just then come into fashion, are thus adverted to :—

"My carriage stared at !—none so high or fine—
Palmer's mail-coach shall be a sledge to mine.
* * * * * *
No longer now the youths beside us stand,
And talking lean, and leaning press the hand;
But, ogling upward, as aloft we sit,
Straining, poor things, their ancles and their wit,
And, much too short the inside to explore,
Hang like supporters half way up the door."

The approach of a "veteran husband," to disturb these flirtations and chase away the lovers, is then hinted at :—

"To persecuted virtue yield assistance,
And for one hour teach younger men their distance,
Make them, in very spite, appear discreet,
And mar the public mysteries of the street."

The affectation of appearing to make love, while talking on indifferent matters, is illustrated by the following simile :—

"So when dramatic statesmen talk apart,
With practis'd gesture and heroic start,
The plot's their theme, the gaping galleries guess,
While Hull and Fearon think of nothing less."

The following lines seem to belong to the same Epilogue:—

"The Campus Martius of St. James's Street,
Where the beau's cavalry pace to and fro,
Before they take the field in Rotton Row;
Where Brooks's Blues and Weltze's Light Dragoons
Dismount in files, and ogle in platoons."

He had also begun another Epilogue, directed against female gamesters, of which he himself repeated a couplet or two to Mr. Rogers a short time before his death, and of which there remain some few scattered traces among his papers :—

"A night of fretful passion may consume,
All that thou hast of beauty's gentle bloom,

And one distemper'd hour of sordid fear
Print on thy brow the wrinkles of a year.*

* * * * * *

Great figure loses, little figure wins.

* * * * * *

Ungrateful blushes and disorder'd sighs,
Which love disclaims nor even shame supplies.

* * * * * *

Gay smiles, which once belong'd to mirth alone,
And starting tears, which pity dares not own."

The following stray couplet would seem to have been intended for his description of Corilla:—

"A crayon Cupid, redd'ning into shape,
Betrays her talent to design and scrape."

Of the Epilogue which follows, Moore remarks that, though apparently finished, it has not yet appeared in print, nor is he at all aware for what occasion it was intended:—

"In this gay month when, through the sultry hour,
The vernal sun denies the wonted shower,
When useful Spring usurps maturer sway,
And pallid April steals the blush of May,
How joys the rustic tribe, to view display'd
The liberal blossom and the early shade!
But ah! far other air our soil delights;
Here 'charming weather' is the worst of blights.
No genial beams rejoice our rustic train,
Their harvest's still the better for the rain.
To summer suns our groves no tribute owe,
They thrive in frost, and flourish best in snow.
When other woods resound the feather'd throng,
Our groves, our woods, are destitute of song.
The thrush, the lark, all leave our mimic vale,
No more we boast our Christmas nightingale;
Poor Rossignol—the wonder of his day,
Sung through the winter—but is mute in May.
Then bashful Spring that gilds fair nature's scene,
O'ercasts our lawns, and deadens every green;

* These four lines are taken—with little change of the words, but a total alteration of the sentiments—from the verses which he addressed to Mrs. Sheridan in the year 1773.

Obscures our sky, embrowns the wooden shade,
And dries the channel of each tin cascade!
"Oh hapless we, whom such ill fate betides,
Hurt by the beam which cheers the world besides?
Who love the ling'ring frost, nice, chilling showers,
While Nature's *Benefit*—is death to ours;
Who, witch-like, best in noxious mists perform,
Thrive in the tempest, and enjoy the storm.
Oh hapless we—unless your generous care
Bids us no more lament that Spring is fair,
But plenteous glean from the dramatic soil,
The vernal harvest of our winter's toil.
For April suns to us no pleasure bring—
Your presence here is all we feel of Spring;
May's riper beauties here no bloom display,
Your fostering smile alone proclaims it May."

A poem upon Windsor Castle, half ludicrous and half solemn, appears, from the many experiments which he made upon it, to have cost him considerable trouble. The Castle, he says,

"Its base a mountain, and itself a rock,
In proud defiance of the tempests' rage,
Like an old gray-hair'd veteran stands each shock—
The sturdy witness of a nobler age."

He then alludes to the "cockney" improvements that had lately taken place, among which the venerable castle appears like

"A helmet on a macaroni's head—
Or like old Talbot turn'd into a fop,
With coat embroider'd and scratch wig at top."

Some verses, of the same mixed character, on the short duration of life and the changes that death produces, thus begin:—

"Of that same tree which gave the box,
Now rattling in the hand of FOX,
Perhaps his coffin shall be made.—"

He then rambles into prose, as was his custom, on a sort of knight-errantry after thoughts and images:—"The lawn thou hast chosen for the bridal shift—thy shroud may be of the

same piece. That flower thou hast bought to feed thy vanity —from the same tree thy corpse may be decked. Reynolds shall, like his colours, fly; and Brown, when mingled with the dust, manure the grounds he once laid out. Death is life's second childhood; we return to the breast from whence we came, are weaned, * * * "

There are a few detached lines and couplets of a poem, intended to ridicule some fair invalid, who was much given to falling in love with her physicians :—

"Who felt her pulse, obtained her heart."

The following couplet, in which he characterizes an amiable friend of his, Dr. Bain, with whom he did not become acquainted till the year 1792, proves these fragments to have been written after that period :—

"Not savage * * * nor gentle BAIN—
She was in love with Warwick Lane."

An "Address to the Prince," on the exposed style of women's dress, consists of little more than single lines, not yet wedded into couplets; such as—"The more you show, the less we wish to see"—"And bare their bodies as they mask their minds," &c. This poem, however, must have been undertaken many years after his entrance into Parliament, as the following curious political memorandum will prove :—"I like it no better for being from France—whence all ills come—altar of liberty, begrimed at once with blood and mire."

There are also some Anacreontics—lively, but boyish and extravagant. For instance, in expressing his love of bumpers :—

"Were mine a goblet that had room
For a whole vintage in its womb,
I still would have the liquor swim
An inch or two above the brim."

The following specimen is from one of those poems, whose length and completeness prove them to have been written at a time of life when he was more easily pleased, and had not yet arrived at that state of glory and torment for the poet, when

" *Toujours mécontent de ce qu'il vient de faire,*
Il plait à tout le monde, et ne sçaurait se plaire :"—

"The Muses call'd, the other morning,
On Phœbus, with a friendly warning
That invocations came so fast,
They must give up their trade at last,
And if he meant t' assist them all,
The aid of Nine would be too small.
Me then, as clerk, the Council chose,
To tell this truth in humble prose.—
But Phœbus, possibly intending
To show what all their hopes must end in,
To give the scribbling youths a sample,
And frighten them by my example,
Bade me ascend the poet's throne,
And give them verse—much like their own.

"Who has not heard each poet sing
The powers of Heliconian spring?
Its noble virtues we are told
By all the rhyming crew of old.
Drink but a little of its well,
And straight you could both write and spell,
While such rhyme-giving pow'rs run through it
A quart would make an epic poet," &c., &c.

A poem on the miseries of a literary drudge begins thus promisingly :—

"Think ye how dear the sickly meal is bought,
By him who works at verse and trades in thought?"

The rest is hardly legible ; but there can be little doubt that he would have done this subject justice ;—for he had himself tasted of the bitterness with which the heart of a man of genius overflows, when forced by indigence to barter away (as it is here expressed) "the reversion of his thoughts," and

"Forestall the blighted harvest of his brain."

SPEECHES.

SPEECHES.

Speech on the fourth charge against Warren Hastings, Esq., late Governor-General of Bengal, as the ground of his impeachment in respect to his conduct towards the Begum Princesses of Oude, 7th February, 1787.

Mr. Sheridan rose, and for the space of five hours and forty minutes, commanded the attention and admiration of the House, by an oration of almost unexampled excellence, uniting the most convincing closeness and accuracy of argument, with the most luminous precision and perspicuity of language; and, alternately giving force by substantial reasoning, and enlightening the most extensive and involved subjects with the purest clearness of logic, and the brightest splendour of rhetoric.

Every prejudice, every prepossesion, was gradually overcome by the force of this extraordinary combination of keen but liberal discrimination, of brilliant but argumentative wit. It will be a permanent record of Mr. Sheridan's unrivalled abilities, that on this trying occasion, which, of all others, had divided not only the House of Commons, but the nation at large into a variety of parties, this memorable speech produced almost universal union. It is utterly impossible to attempt more than an outline of this unprecedented exertion of talents and judgment. We have endeavoured to prepare a faithful miniature of an unequalled original. He commenced his speech by observing

That, had it been possible to have received, without a violation of the established rules of Parliament, the paper which the hon. member (Mr. Dempster) had just now read, he should willingly have receded from any forms of the House, for the

purpose of obtaining new lights and further illustration on the important subject then before them: not, indeed, that on the present occasion he found himself so ill-prepared as merely, for this reason, to be prevented from proceeding to the discharge of his duty; neither, to speak freely, was he inclined to consider any explanatory additions to the evidence of Sir Elijah Impey so much framed to elucidate as to perplex and contradict.

Needless was it to his present purpose to require Sir Elijah Impey legally to recognize what had been read in his name by the hon. gentleman. In fact, neither the informality of any subsisting evidence nor the adducement of any new explanations from Sir Elijah Impey could make the slightest impression upon the vast and strong body of proof which he should now bring forward against Warren Hastings.

Yet, if any motive could have so far operated upon him as to make him industriously seek for a renewed opportunity of questioning Sir Elijah, it would result from his fresh and indignant recollection of the low and artful stratagem of delivering to the members and others, in this last period of parliamentary inquiry, printed handbills of defence, the contents of which bespoke a presumptuous and empty boast of completely refuting all which at any time had or could be advanced against Mr. Hastings, on the subject of the fourth article in the general charge of a right hon. member (Mr. Burke). But even this was far beneath his notice. The rectitude and strength of his cause was not to be prejudiced by such pitiful expedients; nor should he waste a moment in counteracting measures which, though insidious, were proportionately frivolous and unavailing; nor would he take up the time of the committee with any general argument to prove that the subject of the charge which it fell to his lot to bring forward was of great moment and magnitude.

The attention which Parliament had paid to the affairs of India for many sessions past, the voluminous productions of their committees on that subject, the various proceedings in that House respecting it, their own strong and pointed resolutions, the repeated recommendations of his Majesty, and their reiterated assurance of paying due regard to those recommendations, as well as various acts of the Legislature,—were all of them undeniable proofs of the moment and magnitude of the consideration, and incontrovertibly established this plain broad fact, that Parliament directly acknowledges that the British name and character had been dishonoured and rendered

detestable throughout India by the malversation and crimes of the principal servant of the East India Company. The fact having been established beyond all question by themselves, and by their own acts, there needed no argument on his part to induce the committee to see the importance of the subject about to be discussed upon that day, in a more striking point of view than they themselves had held it up to public observation.

There were, he knew, persons without doors, who affected to ridicule the idea of prosecuting Mr. Hastings, and who, not inconsistently, redoubled their exertions in proportion as the prosecution became more serious, to increase their sarcasms upon the subject by asserting that Parliament might be more usefully employed, that there were matters of more immediate moment to engage their attention, that a commercial treaty with France had just been concluded, and that it was of a vast and comprehensive nature, and of itself sufficient to engross their attention.

To all this he would oppose these questions:

Was Parliament misspending its time by inquiring into the oppressions practised on millions of unfortunate persons in India, and endeavouring to bring the daring delinquent who had been guilty of the most flagrant acts of enormous tyranny and rapacious peculation to exemplary and condign punishment? Was it a misuse of their functions to be diligent in attempting by the most effectual means to wipe off the disgrace affixed to the British name in India, and to rescue the national character from lasting infamy? Surely no man who felt for one or the other would think a business of greater moment or magnitude could occupy his attention; or that the House could with too much steadiness, too ardent a zeal, or too industrious a perseverance, pursue its object.

Their conduct in this respect during the course of the preceding year had done them immortal honour, and proved to all the world that however degenerate an example of Englishmen *some* of the British subjects had exhibited in India, the people of England, collectively speaking, and acting by their representatives, felt—as men should feel on such an occasion—that they were anxious to do justice by redressing injuries and punishing offenders, however high their rank, however elevated their station.

Their indefatigable exertions in committees appointed to inquire concerning the affairs of India; their numerous elaborate and clear reports; their long and interesting debates; their solemn addresses to the throne; their rigorous legislative acts;

their marked detestation of that novel and base sophism in the principles of judicial inquiry (constantly the language of the Governor-General's servile dependents), that crimes might be compounded, that the guilt of Mr. Hastings was to be balanced by his successes, that fortunate events were a full and complete set-off against a base system of oppression, corruption, breach of faith, peculation, and treachery; and finally their solemn and awful judgment that, in the case of Benares, Mr. Hastings' conduct was a proper object of parliamentary impeachment, had covered them with applause, and brought them forward in the face of all the world as the objects of perpetual admiration.

Not less unquestionably just then highly virtuous, was the assertion of the Commons of Great Britain, that there were acts which no political necessity could warrant; and that amidst flagrances of such an inexpiable description was the treatment of Cheit-Sing. To use the well-founded and emphatic language of a right hon. gentleman (Mr. Pitt), the committee had discovered in the administration of Mr. Hastings proceedings of strong injustice, of grinding oppression, and unprovoked severity. In this decision, the committee had also vindicated the character of his right hon. friend (Mr. Burke) from the slanderous tongue of ignorance and perversion. They had by this vote on the question declared that the man who brought the charges was no false accuser, that he was not moved by envy, by malice, nor by any unworthy motives to blacken a spotless name; but that he was the indefatigable, persevering, and at length successful, champion of oppressed multitudes against their tyrannical oppressor.

With sound justice, with manly firmness, with unshaken integrity, had his right hon. friend upon all occasions resisted the timid policy of mere remedial acts; even the high opinion of Mr. Hastings' successor, even the admitted worth of Lord Cornwallis' character, had been deemed by his right hon. friend an inadequate atonement to India for the wrongs so heavily inflicted upon that devoted country.

Animated with the same zeal, the committee had by that memorable vote given a solemn pledge of their further intentions. They had said to India, "You shall no longer be reduced into temporary acquiescence by sending out a titled governor or a set of vapouring resolutions; it is not with stars and ribands, and with all the badges of regal favour, that we atone to you for past delinquencies. No; you shall have the

solid consolation of seeing an end to your grievances by an example of punishment for those that have already taken place."

The House had set up a beacon which, while it served to guide their own way, would also make their motions conspicuous to the world which surrounded and beheld them. He had no doubt but in their manly determination they would go through the whole of the business with the same steadiness which gave such sterling brilliance of character to their outset. They might challenge the world to observe and judge of them by the result.

Impossible was it for such men to become improperly influenced by a paper bearing the signature of "Warren Hastings," and put not many minutes before into their hands, as well as his own, on their entrance into the House. This insidious paper he felt himself at liberty to consider as a second defence and a second answer to the charge he was about to bring forward—a charge replete with proof of criminality of the blackest dye, of tyranny the most vile and premeditated, of corruption the most open and shameless, of oppression the most severe and grinding, of cruelty the most unmanly and unparalleled. But he was far from meaning to rest the charge on assertion, or on any warm expressions which the impulse of wounded feelings might produce. He would establish every part of the charge by the most unanswerable proof, and the most unquestionable evidence; and the witness he would bring forth to support every fact he would state should be, for the most part, one whom no man would venture to contradict, Warren Hastings himself; yet this character had friends, nor were they blamable. They might believe him guiltless because he asserted his integrity. Even the partial warmth of friendship, and the emotions of a good, admiring, and unsuspecting heart, might not only carry them to such lengths, but incite them to rise with an intrepid confidence in his vindication. Again would he repeat that the vote of the last session, wherein the conduct of this pillar of India, this corner-stone of our strength in the East, this talisman of the British territories in Asia, was censured, did the greatest honour to this House, as it must be the forerunner of speedy justice on *that* character, which was said to be above censure, and whose conduct we were given to understand was not within the reach even of suspicion, but whose deeds were indeed such as no difficulties, no necessity could justify; for where is the situation, however elevated, and

in that elevation however embarrassed, that can authorize the wilful commission of oppression and rapacity? If, at any period, a point arose on which inquiry had been full, deliberate, and dispassionate, it was the present. There were questions on which party conviction was supposed to be a matter of easy acquisition; and if this inquiry were to be considered merely as a matter of party, he should regard it as very trifling indeed; but he professed to God that he felt in his own bosom the strongest personal conviction, and he was sensible that many other gentlemen did the same. It was on that conviction that he believed the conduct of Mr. Hastings, in regard to the Nabob of Oude and the Begums, comprehended every species human offence. He had proved himself guilty of rapacity at once violent and insatiable—of treachery cool and premeditated—of oppression useless and unprovoked—of breach of faith unwarrantable and base—of cruelty unmanly and unmerciful. These were the crimes of which, in his soul and conscience, he arraigned Warren Hastings, and of which he had the confidence to say he should convict him. As there were gentlemen ready to stand up his advocates, he challenged them to watch if he advanced one inch of assertion for which he had not solid ground; for he trusted nothing to declamation. He desired credit for no fact which he did not prove; and which he did not indeed demonstrate beyond the possibility of refutation. He should not desert the clear and invincible ground of truth throughout any one particle of his allegations against Mr. Hastings, who uniformly aimed to govern India by his own arbitrary power, covering with misery upon misery a wretched people whom Providence had subjected to the dominion of this country; while, in the defence of Mr. Hastings, not one single circumstance grounded upon truth was stated. He would repeat the words, and gentlemen might take them down. The attempt at vindication was false throughout.

Mr. Sheridan, now pursuing the examination of Mr. Hastings' defence, observed that there could not exist a single plea for maintaining that that defence against the particular charge now before the committee was hasty; Mr. Hastings had had sufficient time to make it up; and the committee saw that he thought fit to go back as far as the year 1775, for pretended ground of justification from the charge of violence and rapacity. Mr. Sheridan here read a variety of extracts from the defence, which stated the various steps taken by Mr. Bristow in 1775 and 1776, to procure from the Begums aid to the Nabob. "Not one of these facts, as stated by Mr. Hastings, was true;

groundless, nugatory, and insulting were the affirmations of Mr. Hastings, that the seizure of treasures from the Begums, and the exposition of their pilfered goods to public auction (unparalleled acts of open injustice, oppression, and inhumanity!), were in any degree to be defended by those encroachments on their property which had taken place previous to his administration, or by those sales which they themselves had solicited as a favourable mode of supplying a part of their aid to the Nabob. The relation of a series of plain, indisputable facts would irrevocably overthrow a subterfuge so pitiful, a distinction so ridiculous. It must be remembered, that at that period, the Begums did not merely desire, but they most expressly stipulated, that of the thirty lacs promised, eleven should be paid in sundry articles of manufacture. Was it not obvious, therefore, that the sale of goods, in the first place, far from partaking of the nature of an act of plunder, became an extension of relief, of indulgence, and of accommodation? But, however, he would not be content, like Mr. Hastings, with barely making assertions, or when made against his statement, with barely denying them; on the contrary, whenever he objected to a single statement, he would bring his refutation, and almost in every instance Mr. Hastings himself should be his witness. By the passages which he should beg leave to read, Mr. Hastings wished to insinuate that a claim was set up, in 1775, to the treasure of the Begums, as belonging of right to the Nabob." Mr. Sheridan from a variety of documents, chiefly from the minutes of the Supreme Council, of which Mr. Hastings had been the president, explained the true state of that question. Treasure, which was the source of all cruelties, was the original pretence which Mr. Hastings had made to the Company for the proceeding, and through the whole of his conduct he had alleged the principles of Mahometanism in mitigation of the severities he had sanctioned; as if he meant to insinuate that there was something in Mahometanism which rendered it impious in a son not to plunder his mother. But to show how the case precisely stood, when Mr. Hastings began the attacks, Mr. Sheridan read the minutes of General Claverly, Colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis, who severally spoke of a claim which had been made by the Nabob on the Bhow Begum, in 1775, amounting to two and a half lacs. The opinion contained in those minutes was, that women were, on the death of their husbands, entitled by the Mahometan law only to the property within the zenana where they lived. This opinion was decisive; Mr. Bristow used no threats; no military execution or

rigour was ever menaced; the Begum complied with the requisitions then made, and the disputed property then claimed was given up. After this, the further treasure, namely, that which was within the zenana, was confessedly her own; no fresh right was set up; no pretence was made of any kind to the residue; nay, a treaty was signed by the Nabob, and ratified be the resident, Mr. Bristow, that, on her paying thirty lacs, she should be freed from all further application, and the Company were bound by Mr. Bristow to guarantee this treaty. Here, then, was the issue: after this treaty thus ratified, could there be an argument as to the right of the treasure of the Begums? And if the Mahometan law had ever given a right, was not that right then concluded? To prove, however, the reliance which the princesses of Oude had entertained, even in 1775, of receiving protection and support from the British Government—an expectation so fatally disappointed in later times, Mr Sheridan read an extract of a letter from the Begum, the mother of the Nabob, to Mr. Hastings, received at Calcutta, December 22nd, 1775, wherein she says, "If it is your pleasure that the mother of the late Nabob, myself, and his other women and infant children, should be reduced to a state of dishonour and distress, we must submit; but if, on the contrary, you call to mind the friendship of the late blessed Nabob, you will exert yourself effectually in favour of us who are helpless." And again "If you do not approve of my remaining at Fyzabad, send a person here in your name, to remove the mother of the late Nabob, myself, and about two thousand other women and children, that we may reside with honour and reputation in some other place."

Mr. Sheridan, in a regular progression of evidence, proceeded to state the successive periods, and finally to bring down the immediate subject in question to the day on which Mr. Hastings embraced the project of plundering the Begums; and to justify which he had exhibited in his defence four charges against them, as the grounds and motives of his own conduct: "1. That they had given disturbance at all times to the government of the Nabob, and that they had long manifested a spirit hostile to his and to the English Government; 2. That they excited the Zemindars to revolt at the time of the insurrection at Benares and of the resumption of the Jaghires; 3. That they resisted by armed force the resumption of their own Jaghires; and, 4. That they excited and were accessory to the insurrection at Benares." To each of these charges Mr. Sheridan gave distinct and separate answers. First, on the

subject of the imputed disturbances, which they were falsely said to have occasioned, he could produce a variety of extracts, many of them written by Mr. Hastings himself, to prove that, on the contrary, they had particularly distinguished themselves by their friendship for the English, and the various good offices which they had rendered the Government. Mr. Hastings left Calcutta in 1781, and proceeded to Lucknow, as he said himself, with two great objects in his mind, namely, Benares and Oude. What was the nature of these boasted resources? That he should plunder one or both; the equitable alternative of a highwayman, who in going forth in the evening hesitates which of his resources to prefer, Bagshot or Hounslow. In such a state of generous irresolution did Mr. Hastings proceed to Benares and Oude. At Benares he failed in his pecuniary object. Then, and not till then—not on account of any ancient enmities shown by the Begums—not in resentment for any old disturbances, but because he had failed in one place, and had but two in his prospect, did he conceive the base expedient of plundering these aged women. He had no pretence—he had no excuse—he had nothing but the arrogant and obstinate determination to govern India by his own corrupt will to plead for his conduct. Inflamed by disappointment in his first project, he hastened to the fortress of Chunar, to meditate the more atrocious design of instigating a son against his mother, of sacrificing female dignity and distress to parricide and plunder. At Chunar was that infamous treaty concerted with the Nabob Vizier to despoil the princesses of Oude of their hereditary possessions. There it was that Mr. Hastings had stipulated with one whom he called an independent prince, "that, as great distress has arisen to the Nabob's government from the military power and dominion assumed by the Jaghiredars, he be permitted to resume such as he may find necessary; with a reserve that all such for the amount of whose Jaghires the Company are guarantees shall, in case of the resumptions of their lands, be paid the amount of their net collections, through the resident, in ready money; and that no English resident be appointed to Furruckabad."

No sooner was this foundation of iniquity thus instantly established, in violation of the pledged faith and solemn guarantee of the British Government; no sooner had Mr. Hastings determined to invade the substance of justice, than he resolved to avail himself of her judicial forms, and accordingly despatched a messenger for the Chief Justice of India, to assist him in perpetrating the violations he had projected. Sir Elijah Impey

being arrived, Mr. Hastings with much art proposed a question of opinion, involving an unsubstantiated fact, in order to obtain a surreptitious approbation of the measure he had predetermined to adopt: "The Begums being in open revolt, might not the Nabob confiscate their property?" "Most undoubtedly," was the ready answer of the friendly judge. Not a syllable of inquiry intervened as to the existence of the imputed rebellion, nor a moment's pause as to the ill purposes to which the decision of a chief justice might be perverted. It was not the office of a friend to mix the grave caution and cold circumspection of a judge with an opinion taken in such circumstances; and Sir Elijah had previously declared that he gave his advice not as a judge, but as a friend, a character he equally preferred in the strange office which he undertook of collecting defensive affidavits on the subject of Benares. Mr. Sheridan said, it was curious to reflect on the whole of Sir Elijah's circuit at that perilous time. Sir Elijah had stated his desire of relaxing from the fatigues of office, and unbending his mind in a party of health and pleasure: yet wisely apprehending that very sudden relaxation might defeat its object, he had contrived to mix some objects of business, to be interspersed with his amusement. He had, therefore, in his little airing of 900 miles, great part of which he went post, escorted by an army, selected those very situations where insurrection subsisted, and rebellion threatened; and had not only delivered his deep and curious researches in the laws and rights of nations, and of treaties, in the capacity of the oriental Grotius, whom Warren Hastings was to study, but likewise in the humbler and more practical situation of a collector of *ex parte* evidence. In the former quality his opinion was the premature sanction for plundering the Begums; in the latter character he became the posthumous supporter of the expulsion and pillage of the Rajah Cheit-Sing. Acting on an unproved fact, on a position as ideal as a datum of the Duke of Richmond's fabrication, he had not hesitated, in the first instance, to lend his authority as a licence for unlimited persecution. In the latter, he did not disdain to scud about India like an itinerant informer, with a pedlar's pack of garbled evidence and surreptitious affidavits. What a pure friendship, what a voucher of unequivocal attachment from a British judge to such a character as Warren Hastings! With a generous oblivion of duty and honour,—with a proud sense of having authorized all future rapacity, and sanctioned all past oppression, this friendly judge proceeded on his circuit of health and ease; and while the Governor-General, sanctioned

by this solemn opinion, issued his orders to plunder the Begums of their property, Sir Elijah pursued his progress, and passing through a wide region of distress and misery, explored a country that presented a speaking picture of hunger and of nakedness, in quest of objects best suited to his feelings, in anxious search of calamities most kindred to his invalid imagination. Thus, while the executive power in India was perverted to the most disgraceful inhumanities, the judicial authority also became its close and confidential associate—at the same moment that the sword of government was turned to an assassin's dagger, the pure ermine of justice was stained and soiled with the basest and meanest contamination.

Under such circumstances did Mr. Hastings complete the treaty of Chunar—a treaty which might challenge all the treaties that ever subsisted, for containing in the smallest compass the most extensive treachery. Mr. Hastings did not conclude that treaty till he had received from the Nabob a present, or rather a bribe, of £100,000. The circumstances of this present were as extraordinary as the thing itself. Four months afterwards, and not till then, Mr. Hastings communicated the matter to the Company. Unfortunately for himself, however, this tardy disclosure was conveyed in words which betray his original meaning; for, with no common incaution, he admits the present "was of a magnitude not to be concealed."

Mr. Sheridan stated all the circumstances of this bribe, and averred that the whole had its rise in a principle of rank corruption. For what was the consideration of this extraordinary bribe? No less than the withdrawing from Oude, not only of all the English gentlemen in official situations, but the whole of the English army; and that, too, at the very moment when he himself had stated the whole country of Oude to be in open revolt and rebellion. Other very strange articles were contained in the same treaty, which nothing but this infamous bribe could have occasioned, together with the reverse which he had in his own mind of treachery to the Nabob; for the only part of the treaty which he ever attempted to carry into execution was to withdraw the English gentlemen from Oude. The Nabob, indeed, considered this as essential to his deliverance, and his observation on the circumstance was curious —"for though Major Palmer," said he, "has not yet asked anything, I observe it is the custom of the English gentlemen constantly to ask for something from me before they go." This imputation on the English Mr. Hastings was most ready to countenance as a screen for his own abandoned profligacy;

and, therefore, at the very moment that he pocketed the extorted spoils of the Nabob, with his usual grave hypocrisy and cant, "Go," he said to the English gentlemen, "go, you oppressive rascals, go from this worthy unhappy man whom you have plundered, and leave him to my protection. You have robbed him, you have plundered him, you have taken advantage of his accumulated distresses; but, please God, he shall in future be at rest, for I have promised him he shall never see the face of an Englishman again." This, however, was the only part of the treaty which he ever affected to fulfil; and, in all its other parts, we learn from himself, that at the very moment he made it, he intended to deceive the Nabob; and, accordingly, he advised general instead of partial resumption, for the express purpose of defeating the first views of the Nabob, and, instead of giving instant and unqualified assent to all the articles of the treaty, he perpetually qualified, explained, and varied them with new diminutions and reservations. Mr. Sheridan called upon gentlemen to say, if there is any theory in Machiavel, any treachery upon record, that could equal this monstrous iniquity, if they had ever heard of any cold Italian fraud which could in any degree be put in comparison with the disgusting hypocrisy and unequalled baseness which Mr. Hastings had shown on that occasion.

After having stated this complicated infamy in terms of the severest reprehension, Mr. Sheridan proceeded to observe, that he recollected to have heard it advanced by some of those admirers of Mr. Hastings, who were not so implicit as to give unqualified applause to his crimes; that they found an apology for the atrocity of them in the greatness of his mind. To estimate the solidity of such a defence, it would be sufficient merely to consider in what consisted this prepossessing distinction, this captivating characteristic of greatness of mind! Is it not solely to be traced in great actions directed to great ends? In them, and them alone, we are to search for true magnanimity; to them only can we justly affix the splendid title and honours of real greatness. There was, indeed, another species of greatness, which displayed itself in boldly conceiving a bad measure, and undauntedly pursuing it to its accomplishment. But had Mr. Hastings the merit of exhibiting either of these descriptions of greatness, even of the latter? He saw nothing great, nothing magnanimous, nothing open, nothing direct in his measures, or in his mind. On the contrary, he had too often pursued the worst objects by the worst means. His course was an eternal deviation from rectitude. He either

tyrannized or deceived, and was by turns a Dionysius and a Scapin. As well might the writhing obliquity of the serpent be compared to the swift directness of the arrow, as the duplicity of Mr. Hastings' ambition to the simple steadiness of true magnanimity. In his mind all was shuffling, ambiguous, dark, insidious, and little; nothing simple, nothing unmixed; all affected plainness, and actual dissimulation. A heterogeneous mass of contradictory qualities; with nothing great but his crimes; and even those contrasted by the littleness of his motives, which at once denoted both his baseness and his meanness, and marked him for a traitor and a trickster: nay, in his style and writing, there was the same mixture of vicious contrarieties. The most grovelling ideas he conveyed in the most inflated language, giving mock consequence to low cavils, and uttering quibbles in heroics; so that his compositions disgusted the mind's taste as much as his actions excited the soul's abhorrence. Indeed, this mixture of character seemed by some unaccountable, but inherent quality, to be appropriated, though in inferior degrees, to everything that concerned his employers. He remembered to have heard an hon. gentleman (Mr. Dundas) remark, that there was something in the first frame and constitution of the Company, which extended the sordid principles of their origin over all their successive operations, connecting with their civil policy, and even with their boldest achievements, the meanness of a pedlar and the profligacy of pirates. Alike in the political and military line could be observed auctioneering ambassadors and trading generals: and thus we saw a revolution brought about by affidavits! an army employed in executing an arrest! a town besieged on a note of hand! a prince dethroned for the balance of an account! Thus it was they exhibited a government, which united the mock majesty of a bloody sceptre and the little traffic of a merchant's counting-house—wielding a truncheon with one hand, and picking a pocket with the other.

Mr. Sheridan now went into a long statement to show the various irrefragable proofs, exhibited in the minutes of the Bengal Council, of the falsity of the charge that the Begums were the ancient disturbers of the government: and equally to prove that the second charge also, namely, that the Begums had incited the Jaghiredars to resist the Nabob, was no less untrue, it being substantiated in evidence that not one of the Jaghiredars did resist. "Sir, I maintain that it was incontrovertible that the Begums were not concerned, either in the rebellion of Bulbudder, or the insurrection at Benares; nor did Mr. Hastings

ever once seriously believe them guilty. Their treasures were their treasons, and Asoph-ul-Dowlah thought like an unwise prince when he blamed his father for leaving him so little wealth. But his father, Sujah-ul-Dowlah, acted wisely in leaving his son with no temptation about him, to invite acts of violence from the rapacious. He clothed him with poverty as with a shield, and armed him with necessity as with a sword." The third charge was equally false. Did they resist the resumption of their own Jaghiredars? Though if they had resisted, he contended there would have been no crime, for those Jaghires were by solemn treaty confirmed to them; but, on the contrary, there was not one syllable of charge against them. The Nabob himself, with all the load of obloquy which he incurred, never imputed to them the crime of stirring up an opposition to his authority. To prove the falsehood of the whole of this charge, and to show that Mr. Hastings originally projected the plunder, that he threw the odium in the first instance on the Nabob, that he imputed the crimes to them before he had received one of the rumours which he afterwards manufactured into affidavits, Mr. Sheridan recommended a particular attention to dates; and he deduced from the papers these facts:—"That the first idea was started by Mr. Hastings on the 15th Nov. 1781; that Mr. Middleton communicated it to the Nabob, and procured from him a formal proposition on the 2nd Dec.; that on the 1st Dec. Mr. Hastings wrote a letter to Mr. Middleton confirming the first suggestion made through Sir Elijah, which letter came into the hands of Mr. Middleton on the 6th Dec." He stated all the circumstances of the pains taken by Mr. Middleton to bring the Nabob at length to issue the perwaunas, and coupled this with the extraordinary minute written by Mr. Hastings on his return to Calcutta, where he stated the resistance of the Begums to the execution of the resumption on the 7th Jan., 1782, as the cause of the measure in Nov., 1781. He then proceeded to prove that the Begums were, by their condition, their age, and their infirmities, almost the only souls in India who could not have a thought of distressing that government, by which alone they could hope to be protected; and that to charge them with a design to depose their nearest and dearest relation, was equally absurd. He did not endeavour to do this from any idea, that because there was no motive for the offences imputed to these women, it was, therefore, a necessary consequence that such imputations were false. He was not to learn that there was such a crime as wanton, unprovoked wickedness. Those who entertained doubts on

this point need only give themselves the trouble of reading the administration of Mr. Hastings. But, as to the immediate case, the documents on the table would bear incontrovertible testimony that insurrection had constantly taken place in Oude. To ascribe it to the Begums was wandering even beyond the improbabilities of fiction. It would be not less absurd to affirm that famine would not have pinched, nor thirst have parched, nor extermination have depopulated, but for the interference of these old women. To use a strong expression of Mr. Hastings on another occasion: The good which those women did was certain, the ill was precarious. But Mr. Hastings had found it more suitable to his purpose to reverse the proposition; yet wanting a motive for his rapacity, he could find it only in fiction. The simple fact was, their treasure was their treason. But they complained of the injustice. God of heaven! had they not a right to complain? After a solemn treaty violated, plundered of all their property, and on the eve of the extremity of wretchedness, were they to be deprived of the last resource of impotent wretchedness—complaint and lamentation? Was it a crime that they should crowd together in fluttering trepidation like a flock of resistless birds on seeing the felon kite, who, having darted at one devoted bird and missed his aim, singled out a new object, and was springing on his prey, with redoubled vigour on his wing, and keener vengeance in his eye? The fact with Mr. Hastings was precisely this: having failed in the case of Cheit-Sing, he saw his fate; he felt the necessity of procuring a sum of money somewhere, for he knew *that* to be the never-failing receipt to make his peace with the directors at home. Such were the true motives of the horrid excesses perpetrated against the Begums—excesses, in every part of the description of which, he felt himself accompanied by the vigorous support of most unanswerable evidence; and upon this test would he place his whole cause; let gentlemen lay their hands upon their hearts, and with truth issuing in all its purity from their lips, solemnly declare whether they were or were not convinced that the real spring of the conduct of Mr. Hastings, far from being a desire to crush a rebellion, an ideal, fabulous rebellion, was a rapacious determination to seize, with lawless hands, upon the treasures of devoted, miserable, yet unoffending victims.

Mr. Sheridan now adverted to the affidavit made by Mr. Middleton; and after stating how futile were the grounds upon which he had, to the satisfaction of his conscience, proceeded to the utmost extremity of violence against the Begums, he exclaimed, "The God of justice forbid that any man in this

House should make up his mind to accuse Mr. Hastings upon the ground which Mr. Middleton took for condemning the Begums, or to pass a verdict of guilty for the most trivial misdemeanour against the poorest wretch that ever had existed!" He then animadverted on the affidavits of Colonel Hanway, Colonel Gordon, Major M'Donald, Major Williams, and others. Major Williams, among the strange reports that chiefly filled these affidavits, stated one that he had heard, viz., that fifty British troops, watching two hundred prisoners, had been surrounded by six thousand of the enemy, and relieved by the approach of nine men! And of such extraordinary hearsay evidence were most of the depositions composed. Considering, therefore, the character given by Mr. Hastings to the British army in Oude, "that they manifested a rage of rapacity and peculation," it was extraordinary that there were no instances of stouter swearing. But as for Colonel Gordon, he afforded a flagrantly conspicuous proof of the grateful spirit and temper of affidavits designed to plunge these wretched women in irretrievable ruin. Colonel Gordon was, just before, not merely released from danger, but preserved from imminent death, by the very person whose accuser he thought fit to become; and yet, incredible as it may appear, even at the expiration of two little days from his deliverance, he deposes against the distressed and unfortunate woman who had become his saviour, and only upon hearsay evidence accuses her of crimes and rebellion. "Great God of justice!" exclaimed Mr. Sheridan, "canst Thou from Thy eternal throne look down upon such premeditated turpitude of heart, and not fix some mark of dreadful vengeance upon the perpetrators?" Of Mr. M'Donald, he said that he liked not the memory which remembered things better at the end of five years than at the time, unless there might be something so relaxing in the climate of India, and so affecting the memory as well as the nerves, "the soft figures melting away," and the images of immediate action instantaneously dissolving: men must return to their native air of England, to brace up the mind as well as their body, and have their memories, like their sinews, re-strung.

Having painted the loose quality of the affidavits, he said that he must pause a moment, and particularly address himself to one description of gentlemen—those of the learned profession—within those walls. They saw that that House was the path to fortune in their profession—that they might soon expect that some of them were to be called to a dignified situation, where the great and important trust would be reposed in

them of protecting the lives and fortunes of their fellow-subjects. One learned gentleman in particular (Sir Lloyd Kenyon), if rumour spoke right, might suddenly be called to succeed that great and venerable character who long had shone the brightest luminary of his profession, whose pure and steady light was clear even to its latest moment, but whose last beam must now too soon be extinguished. He would ask the supposed successor of Lord Mansfield calmly to reflect on these extraordinary depositions, and solemnly to declare whether the mass of affidavits taken at Lucknow would be received by him as evidence to convict the lowest subject in this country. If he said it would, he declared to God he would sit down, and not add a syllable more to the too long trespass he had made on the patience of the committee.

Mr. Sheridan went further into the exposure of the evidence, into the comparison of dates, and the subsequent circumstances, in order to prove that all the enormous consequences which followed from the resumption, in the captivity of the women, and the imprisonment and cruelties practised on their people, were solely to be imputed to Mr. Hastings. After stating the miseries which the women suffered, he said that Mr. Hastings had once remarked that a mind touched with superstition might have contemplated the fate of the Rohillas with peculiar impressions. But if, indeed, the mind of Mr. Hastings could yield to superstitious imagination—if his fancy could suffer any disturbance, and even in vision image forth the proud spirit of Sujah-ul-Dowlah looking down upon the ruin and devastation of his family, and beholding that palace which Mr. Hastings had first wrested from his hand, and afterwards restored, plundered by that very army with which he himself had vanquished the Mahrattas: seizing on the very plunder which he had ravaged from the Rohillas; that Middleton who had been engaged in managing the previous violations most busy to perpetrate the last; that very Hastings whom, on his death-bed, he had left the guardian of his wife, and mother, and family, turning all those dear relations, the objects of his solemn trust, forth to the merciless seasons and to a more merciless soldiery;—a mind touched with superstition must, indeed, have cherished such a contemplation with peculiar impressions. That Mr. Hastings was regularly acquainted with all the enormities committed on the Begums there was the clearest proof. It was true that Middleton was rebuked for not being more exact. He did not, perhaps, descend to the detail; he did not give him an account of the number of

groans which were heaved, of the quantity of tears which we shed, of the weight of the fetters, or of the depth of the dungeons; but he communicated every step which he took to accomplish the base and unwarrantable end. He told him that to save appearances they must use the name of the Nabob, and that they need go no farther than was absolutely necessary; this he might venture to say, without being suspected by Mr. Hastings of too severe a morality. The Governor-General also endeavoured to throw a share of the guilt on the council, although Mr. Wheeler had never taken any share, and Mr. Macpherson had not arrived in India when the scene began. After contending that he had shrunk from the inquiry ordered by the court of directors, under a new and pompous doctrine, that the majesty of justice was to be approached by supplication, and was not to degrade itself by hunting for crimes, forgetting the infamous employment to which he had appointed an English chief justice—to hunt for criminal charges against innocent, defenceless women. Mr. Sheridan said he trusted that the House would vindicate the insulted character of justice; that they would demonstrate its true quality, essence, and purposes—that they would prove it to be, in the case of Mr. Hastings, active, inquisitive, and avenging.

Mr. Sheridan remarked that he had heard of factions and parties in that House, and knew they existed. There was scarcely a subject upon which they were not broken and divided into sects. The prerogative of the Crown found its advocates among the representatives of the people. The privileges of the people found opponents even in the House of Commons itself. Habits, connections, parties, all led to diversity of opinion. But when inhumanity presented itself to their observation, it found no division among them; they attacked it as their common enemy, and, as if the character of this land was involved in their zeal for its ruin, they left it not till it was completely overthrown. It was not given to that House to behold the objects of their compassion and benevolence in the present extensive consideration, as it was to the officers who relieved and who so feelingly describe the ecstatic emotions of gratitude in the instant of deliverance; they could not behold the workings of the hearts, the quivering lips, the trickling tears, the loud and yet tremulous joy of the millions whom their vote of this night would for ever save from the cruelty of corrupted power; but, though they could not directly see the effects, was not the true enjoyment of their benevolence increased by the blessing being conferred unseen? Would not the omnipotence of Britain

be demonstrated to the wonder of nations, by stretching its mighty arm across the deep, and saving by its fiat distant millions from destruction? And would the blessings of the people thus saved dissipate in empty air? "No! If I may dare" (said Mr. Sheridan) "to use the figure, we shall constitute Heaven itself our proxy, to receive for us the blessings of their pious gratitude and the prayers of their thanksgiving. It is with confidence, therefore, sir, that I move you on this charge—that Warren Hastings, Esq., be impeached."

On the conclusion of Mr. Sheridan's speech, he sat down; the whole House, the members, peers, and strangers involuntarily joined in a tumult of applause, and adopted a mode of expressing their approbation, new and irregular in that House, by loudly and repeatedly clapping with their hands.

THE SPEECH KNOWN AS THE BEGUM SPEECH,

To support the impeachment of Warren Hastings, Esq., on the second charge, with regard to his conduct towards the Begum princesses of Oude, delivered at Westminster Hall, on the 3rd, 6th, 10th, and 13th June, 1788.

In the course of his exordium, after insisting upon the great importance of the inquiry, and disclaiming on behalf of himself and his brother-managers any feeling of personal malice against the defendant, or any motive but that of vindicating the honour of the British name in India, and punishing those whose inhumanity and injustice had disgraced it, he proceeded to conciliate the court by a warm tribute to the purity of English justice.

"However, when I have said this, I trust your lordships will not believe that, because something is necessary to retrieve the British character, we call for an example to be made, without due and solid proof of the guilt of the person whom we pursue: no, my lords, we know well that it is the glory of this Constitution, that not the general fame or character of any man—not the weight or power of any prosecutor—no plea of moral or political expediency—not even the secret consciousness of guilt, which may live in the bosom of the judge, can justify any British court in passing any sentence, to touch a hair of the head, or an atom, in any respect, of the property, of the fame, of the liberty of the poorest or meanest subject that breathes the air of this just and free land. We know, my lords, that there can be no legal guilt without legal proof, and that the rule which defines the evidence is as much the law of the land as

that which creates the crime. It is upon that ground we mean to stand."

Mr. Hastings had delivered at the bar of the House of Commons, at the commencement of the prosecution, a written refutation of the charges then pending against him in that House, declaring, at the same time, that "if truth could tend to convict him, he was content to be, himself, the channel to convey it." Afterwards, he came forward to disavow this document at the bar of the House of Lords, and brought his friend, Major Scott, to prove that it had been drawn up by Messrs. Shore, Middleton, &c., &c., that he had not even seen it, and therefore ought not to be held accountable for its contents. In adverting to this extraordinary evasion, Mr. Sheridan thus shrewdly and playfully exposed all the persons concerned in it:—

"I am astonished that, having the benefit of such advice as he now has, and being relieved from his own rash guidance, that he should think it a wise or decent thing to show his contempt for one House of Parliament, by confessing the impositions he has practised on the other. Major Scott comes to your bar—describes the shortness of time—represents Mr. Hastings, as it were, *contracting for* a character—putting his memory *into commission*—making *departments* for his conscience. A number of friends meet together, and he, knowing, no doubt, that the accusation of the Commons had been drawn up by a committee, thought it necessary, as a point of punctilio, to answer it by a committee also. One furnishes the raw material of fact, the second spins the argument, and the third twines up the conclusion, while Mr. Hastings, with a master's eye, is cheering and looking over this loom. He says to one, 'You have got my good faith in your hands—*you*, my veracity to manage. Mr. Shore, I hope you will make me a good financier. Mr. Middleton, you have my humanity in commission.' —When it is done, he brings it to the House of Commons, and says, 'I was equal to the task; I knew the difficulties, but I scorn them: here is the truth, and if the truth will convict me I am content to be the channel of it.' His friends hold up their heads, and say, 'What noble magnanimity! This must be the effect of conscious and real innocence.' Well, it is so received, it is so argued upon—but it fails of its effect.

"Then, says Mr. Hastings,—'That my defence! no, mere journeyman-work, good enough for the Commons, but not fit for your lordships' consideration!' He then calls upon his counsel to save him:—'I fear none of my accusers' witnesses—

I know some of them well. I know the weakness of their memory, and the strength of their attachment. I fear no testimony but my own—save me from the peril of my own panegyric—preserve me from that and I shall be safe!' Then is this plea brought to your lordships' bar, and Major Scott gravely asserts that Mr. Hastings did, at the bar of the House of Commons, vouch for facts of which he was ignorant, and for arguments which he had never read. After such an attempt, we certainly are left in doubt to decide, to *which set* of his friends Mr. Hastings is the least obliged, those who assisted him in making his defence, or those who advised him to deny it."

The hon. manager then described the feelings of the people of the East with respect to the unapproachable sanctity of their Zenanas :—

"It is too much, I am afraid, the case, that persons used to European manners do not take up these sort of considerations at first with the seriousness that is necessary. For your lordships cannot even learn the right nature of those people's feelings and prejudices from any history of other Mahometan countries, not even from that of the Turks, for they are a mean and degraded race in comparison with many of these great families, who, inheriting from their Persian ancestors, preserve a purer style of prejudice and a loftier superstition. Women are not as in Turkey, they neither go to the mosque nor to the bath—it is not the thin veil alone that hides them—but in the inmost recesses of their zenana they are kept from public view by those reverenced and protected walls, which, as Mr. Hastings and Sir Elijah Impey admit, are held sacred even by the ruffian hand of war, or by the more uncourteous hand of law. But, in this situation, they are not confined from a mean and selfish policy of man—not from a coarse and sensual jealousy—enshrined rather than immured, their habitation and retreat is a sanctuary, not a prison—their jealousy is their own—a jealousy of their own honour, that leads them to regard liberty as a degradation, and the gaze of even admiring eyes as inexpiable pollution to the purity of their fame and the sanctity of their honour.

"Such being the general opinion (or prejudices let them be called) of this country, your lordships will find that whatever treasures were given or lodged in a zenana of this description must, upon the evidence of the thing itself, be placed beyond the reach of resumption. To dispute with the counsel about the original right to those treasures, to talk of a title to them

by the Mahometan law! their title to them is the title of a saint to the relics upon an altar, placed their by Piety, guarded by holy superstition, and to be snatched from thence only by sacrilege." With regard to the pretended rebellion, which was conjured up by Mr. Hastings to justify the robbery of his relations by the Nabob, he said,—

"The fact is, that through all his defences—through all his various false suggestions—through all these various rebellions and disaffections, Mr. Hastings never once lets go this plea of unextinguishable right in the Nabob. He constantly represents the seizing of the treasure as a resumption of a right which he could not part with; as if there were literally something in the Koran that made it criminal in a true Mussulman to keep his engagements with his relations, and impious in a son to abstain from plundering a mother. I do gravely assure your lordships that there is no such doctrine in the Koran, and no such principle makes a part in the civil or municipal jurisprudence of that country. Even after these princesses had been endeavouring to dethrone the Nabob and to extirpate the English, the only plea the Nabob ever makes, is his right under the Mahometan law; and the truth is, he appears never to have heard any other reason, and I pledge myself to make it appear to your lordships, however extraordinary it may be, that not only had the Nabob never heard of the rebellion till the moment of seizing the palace, but, still further, that he never heard of it at all; that this extraordinary rebellion, which was as notorious as the rebellion of 1745 in London, was carefully concealed from those two parties—the Begums who plotted it, and the Nabob who was to be the victim of it.

"The existence of this rebellion was not the secret, but the notoriety of it was the secret; it was a rebellion which had for its object the destruction of no human creature but those who planned it; it was a rebellion which, according to Mr. Middleton's expression, no man, either horse or foot, ever marched to quell. The Chief Justice was the only man who took the field against it, the force against which it was raised, instantly withdrew to give it elbow-room; and even then it was a rebellion which perversely showed itself in acts of hospitality to the Nabob whom it was to dethrone, and to the English whom it was to extirpate; it was a rebellion plotted by two feeble old women, headed by two eunuchs, and suppressed by an affidavit."

He then alluded to the acceptance of a private present or bribe of £100,000 received by Mr. Hastings:—

"My lords, such was the distressed situation of the Nabob

about a twelvemonth before Mr. Hastings met him at Chunar. It was a twelvemonth, I say, after this miserable scene—a mighty period in the progress of British rapacity—it was (if the counsel will) after some natural calamities had aided the superior vigour of British violence and rapacity, it was after the country had felt other calamities besides the English, it was after the angry dispensations of Providence had, with a progressive severity of chastisement, visited the land with a famine one year, and with a Col. Hannay the next; it was after he, this Hannay, had returned to retrace the steps of his former ravages, it was after he and his voracious crew had come to plunder ruins which himself had made, and to glean from desolation the little that famine had spared, or rapine overlooked; *then* it was that this miserable bankrupt prince, marching through his country, besieged by the clamours of his starving subjects, who cried to him for protection through their cages, meeting the curses of some of his subjects, and the prayers of others, with famine at his heels, and reproach following him, then it was that this prince is represented as exercising this act of prodigal bounty to the very man whom he here reproaches, to the very man whose policy had extinguished his power, and whose creatures had desolated his country. To talk of a free-will gift! it is audacious and ridiculous to name the supposition. It was *not* a free-will gift. What was it then? Was it a bribe? or was it extortion? I shall prove it was both, it was an act of gross bribery and of rank extortion."

In speaking again of this present he said:—

"The first thing he does is to leave Calcutta, in order to go to the relief of the distressed Nabob. The second thing is to take £100,000 from that distressed Nabob on account of the distressed Company. And the third thing is to ask of the distressed Company this very same sum on account of the distresses of Mr. Hastings. There never were three distresses that seemed so little reconcilable with one another." With the following burst of rhetoric he anticipated the plea of state-necessity which might be put forward on behalf of the Governor-General.

"State-necessity! no, my lords, that imperial tyrant, state-necessity, is yet a generous despot; bold is his demeanour, rapid his decisions, and terrible his grasp. But what he does, my lords, he dares avow, and, avowing, scorns any other justification than the great motive that placed the iron sceptre in his hand. But a quibbling, pilfering, prevaricating state-necessity that tries to skulk behind the skirts of justice; a state-necessity

that tries to steal a pitiful justification from whispered accusations and fabricated rumours! no, my lords, that is no state-necessity; tear off the mask, and you see coarse vulgar avarice, you see peculation lurking under the gaudy disguise, and adding the guilt of libelling the public honour to its own private fraud."

In describing that swarm of pensioners and parasites who were still in violation of the treaty so lately purchased, he said:—

"Here we find they were left, as heavy a weight upon the Nabob as ever, left there with as keen an appetite, though not so clamorous. They were reclining on the roots and shades of that spacious tree, which their predecessors had stripped branch and bough, watching with eager eyes the first budding of a future prosperity, and of the opening harvest which they considered as the prey of their perseverance and rapacity."

Mr. Sheridan then entered minutely into the evidence, beginning with the negotiation of Mr. Bristow and the solemn treaty then completed, by which, whatever was the original right of the state to the treasures of the Begums, those treasures were secured on payment of £560,000. He commented upon the extraordinary declarations of Mr. Hastings against Mr. Bristow for not completing the ruin of the princesses, "as if the injustice of rapine was to be done away by its enormity."

He then adverted to the negotiations of Mr. Middleton in 1778, when the superior Begum would have left the country unless her authority was sanctioned and her property secured by the guarantee of the company. "This guarantee Mr. Hastings now denied, knowing that if the agreement was proved it would affix to him all the guilt of the suffering of the women of Khord Mahal."

Mr. Sheridan proved from the evidence of Mr. Middleton that a treaty had been signed in 1778, wherein the rights of the Begums had been fully recognized; a provision secured for the women and children of the late Vizier in the Khord Mahal, and that these engagements had received the fullest sanction of Mr. Hastings. In alluding to this and to the subsequent treaty with the Nabob at Chunar, he pointedly remarked, "I do not mean to say that Mr. Middleton had *direct* instructions from Mr. Hastings, that he told him to go and give that fallacious assurance to the Nabob, that he had that order under his hand. No, but in looking attentively over Mr. Middleton's correspondence, you will find him say, upon a more important occasion, 'I don't expect your public authority for this, it is enough if you but *hint* your pleasure.' He knew him well;

he could interpret every nod and motion of that head; he understood the glances of that eye which sealed the perdition of nations, and at whose throne princes waited, in pale expectation, for their fortune or their doom. The fact is, that when Mr. Hastings went from Calcutta, as he himself avowed, he had but two resources, Benares and Oude. Benares failed, and having to fulfil the gratification of a mean mind; he desolated the country which he had not been able to pillage, destroying and cutting off all sources of resuscitation; he turned his eye to Oude, and here it was that he first, in all probability, projected the memorable rebellion."

The conduct of Sir Elijah Impey in this business would not pass without animadversion; Mr. Sheridan said, "I will not question his feebleness of memory, nor dispute in any respect the doctrine he had set up, *that which it was likely he should have done, he took for granted he had done*—but conceding this, I must be permitted to suspect that what he should have done, he really had not done—and this I conceive to be perfectly fair reasoning. It is not likely that he should propose to go to Fyzabad, which was considerably out of his way, at the moment the rebellion was said to rage there. Sir Elijah has admitted that, in giving his evidence, he has never answered without looking equally to the probability and the consequences of the fact in question. Sometimes he has even admitted circumstances of which he has no recollection, beyond the mere probability that they had taken place. By consulting what was probable and the contrary, he may certainly have corrected his memory at times, and I will accept that mode of giving testimony provided that the inverse of the proposition may have place; and that where a circumstance is improbable a similar degree of improbability may be subtracted from the testimony of the witness. Five times in the House of Commons and twice in that court has Sir Elijah Impey sworn that a rebellion was raging at Fyzabad, at the time of his journey to Lucknow. Yet on the eighth examination he has contradicted all the former, and declared that what he meant was, that the rebellion *had been* raging and that the country was then restored to quiet. Thus he ignores the letter he received from Mr. Hastings informing him that the rebellion was quelled, and, also, his own proposition of travelling through Fyzabad to Lucknow."

Having pointed out the various modes by which the fiction of a rebellion had solicited, but in vain, the credulity of mankind, and ridiculed Sir Elijah Impey's journey, he pressed upon

their lordships' attention the utter improbability of the whole farce. Mr. Sheridan then entered into a minute discussion on the affidavits, reading, comparing, and commenting on a variety of the most curious passages that were ever dignified with the sanction of an oath. He particularly adverted to the affidavit of Hyder Beg Cawn, the minister of the Nabob, which made no mention of the pretended rebellion. Having disposed of the affidavits, he stated that the commotions in Oude were solely to be attributed to the English. He pointed out the steps taken by the Nabob to deliver his country from the pillage and rapine that was devastating it, especially from the vulture grasp of Colonel Hannay. He thus describes the desolation brought upon some provinces of Oude by the misgovernment of this officer, and the insurrection at Gorruckpore against him in consequence:—

"If we could suppose a person to have come suddenly into the country, unacquainted with any circumstances that had passed since the days of Sujah-ul-Dowlah, he would naturally ask—What cruel hand has wrought this wide desolation, what barbarian foe has invaded the country, has desolated its fields, depopulated its villages? He would ask, What disputed succession, civil rage, or frenzy of the inhabitants had induced them to act in hostility to the words of God, and the beauteous works of man? He would ask, What religious zeal or frenzy had added to the mad despair and horrors of war? The ruin is unlike anything that appears recorded in any age; it looks like neither the barbarities of men, nor the judgments of vindictive Heaven. There is a waste of desolation, as if caused by fell destroyers, never meaning to return and making but a short period of their rapacity. It looks as if some fabled monster had made its passage through the country, whose pestiferous breath had blasted more than its voracious appetite could devour.

If there had been any men in the country, who had not their hearts and souls so subdued by fear, as to refuse to speak the truth at all upon such a subject, they would have told him, there had been no war since the time of Sujah-ul-Dowlah,—tyrant, indeed, as he was, but then deeply regretted by his subjects—that no hostile blow of any enemy had been struck in that land—that there had been no disputed succession—no civil war—no religious frenzy,—but that these were the tokens of British friendship, the marks left by the embraces of British allies—more dreadful than the blows of the bitterest enemy. They would tell him that these allies had converted a prince into a slave, to make him the principal in the extortion upon

his subjects;—that their rapacity increased in proportion as the means of supplying their avarice diminished; that they made the sovereign pay as if they had a right to an increased price, because the labour of extortion and plunder increased. To such causes, they would tell him, these calamities were owing.

"Need I refer your lordships to the strong testimony of Major Naylor when he rescued Colonel Hannay from their hands—where you see that this people, born to submission and beat to most abject subjection—that even they, in whose meek hearts injury had never yet begot resentment, nor even despair bred courage—that *their* hatred, *their* abhorrence of Colonel Hannay was such that they clung round him by thousands and thousands;—that when Major Naylor rescued him, they refused life from the hand that could rescue Hannay;—that they nourished this desperate consolation, that by their death they should at least thin the number of wretches who suffered by his devastation and extortion. He says that, when he crossed the river, he found the poor wretches, quivering upon the parched banks of the polluted river, encouraging their blood to flow, and consoling themselves with the thought, that it would not sink into the earth, but rise to the common God of humanity, and cry aloud for vengeance on their destroyers! This warm description—which is no declamation of mine, but founded in actual fact, and in fair, clear proof before your lordships—speaks powerfully what the cause of these oppressions were, and the perfect justness of those feelings that were occasioned by them. And yet, my lords, I am asked to prove *why* these people arose in such concert:—'There must have been machinations, forsooth, and the Begums' machinations to produce all this!' Why did they rise? Because they were people in human shape; because patience under the detested tyranny of man is rebellion to the sovereignty of God; because allegiance to that Power that gives us the *forms* of men commands us to maintain the *rights* of men. And never yet was this truth dismissed from the human heart—never in any time, in any age—never in any clime, where rude man ever had any social feeling, or where corrupt refinement had subdued all feelings,—never was this one unextinguishable truth destroyed from the heart of man, placed, as it is, in the core and centre of it by his Maker, that man was not made the property of man; that human power is a trust for human benefit; and that when it is abused, revenge becomes justice, if not the bounden duty of the injured. These, my lords, were the causes why these people rose."

Another passage in the second day's speech is remarkable, as exhibiting a sort of tourney of intellect between Sheridan and Burke, in that field of abstract speculation which was the favourite arena of the latter. Mr. Burke had, in opening the prosecution, remarked that prudence is a quality incompatible with vice, and can never be effectively enlisted in its cause :—"I never," he said, "knew a man who was bad, fit for *service* that was good. There is always some disqualifying ingredient, mixing and spoiling the compound. The man seems paralytic on that side; his muscles there have lost their very tone and character; they cannot move. In short, the accomplishment of anything good is a physical impossibility for such a man. There is decrepitude as well as distortion: he could not, if he would, is not more certain than that he would not, if he could." To this sentiment the allusions in the following passage refer :—

"I am perfectly convinced that there is one idea which must arise in your lordships' minds as a subject of wonder—how a person of Mr. Hastings' reputed abilities can furnish such matter of accusation against himself. For it must be admitted that never was there a person who seems to go so rashly to work, with such an arrogant appearance of contempt for all conclusions, that may be deduced from what he advances upon the subject. When he seems most earnest and laborious to defend himself, it appears as if he had but one idea uppermost in his mind—a determination not to care what he says, provided he keeps clear of fact. He knows that truth must convict him, and concludes, *à converso*, that falsehood will acquit him; forgetting that there must be some connection, some system, some co-operation, or otherwise his host of falsities fall without an enemy, self-discomfited and destroyed. But of this he never seems to have had the slightest apprehension. He falls to work, an artificer of fraud, against all the rules of architecture: he lays his ornamental work first, and his massy foundation at the top of it; and thus his whole building tumbles upon his head. Other people look well to their ground, choose their position, and watch whether they are likely to be surprised there; but he, as if in the ostentation of his heart, builds upon a precipice, and encamps upon a mine from choice. He seems to have no

one actuating principle, but a steady, persevering resolution not to speak the truth nor to tell the fact.

"It is impossible almost to treat conduct of this kind with perfect seriousness; yet I am aware that it ought to be more seriously accounted for—because I am sure it has been a sort of paradox, which must have struck your lordships, how any person having so many motives to conceal—having so many reasons to dread detection—should yet go to work so clumsily upon the subject. It is possible, indeed, that it may raise this doubt—whether such a person is of sound mind enough to be a proper object of punishment; or at least it may give a kind of confused notion, that the guilt cannot be of so deep and black a grain, over which such a thin veil was thrown, and so little trouble taken to avoid detection. I am aware that, to account for this seeming paradox, historians, poets, and even philosophers—at least of ancient times—have adopted the superstitious solution of the vulgar, and said that the gods deprive men of reason whom they devote to destruction or to punishment. But to unassuming or unprejudiced reason, there is no need to resort to any supposed supernatural interference; for the solution will be found in the eternal rules that formed the mind of man, and gave a quality and nature to every passion that inhabits it.

"An honourable friend of mine, who is now, I believe, near me—a gentleman to whom I never can on any occasion refer without feelings of respect, and, on this subject, without feelings of the most grateful homage—a gentleman whose abilities upon this occasion, as upon some former ones, happily for the glory of the age in which we live, are not entrusted merely to the perishable eloquence of the day, but will live to be the admiration of that hour when all of us are mute, and most of us forgotten—that honourable gentleman has told you that prudence, the first of virtues, never can be used in the cause of vice. If, reluctant and diffident, I might take such a liberty, I should express a doubt whether experience, observation, or history, will warrant us in fully assenting to this observation. It is a noble and a lovely sentiment, my lords, worthy the mind of him who uttered it, worthy that proud disdain, that generous scorn of the means and instruments of vice which virtue and genius must ever feel. But I should doubt whether we can read the history of a Philip of Macedon, a Cæsar, or a Cromwell, without confessing that there have been evil purposes, baneful to the peace and to the rights of men, conducted—if I may not say with prudence or with wisdom—yet with awful craft and

most successful and commanding subtlety. If, however, I might make a distinction, I should say that it is the proud attempt to mix a *variety* of lordly crimes, that unsettles the prudence of the mind, and breeds this distraction of the brain. *One* master-passion, domineering in the breast, may win the faculties of the understanding to advance its purpose, and to direct to that object everything that thought or human knowledge can effect; but, to succeed, it must maintain a solitary despotism in the mind—each rival profligacy must stand aloof, or wait in abject vassalage upon its throne. For the Power that has not forbad the entrance of evil passions into man's mind has, at least, forbad their union; if they meet they defeat their object, and their conquest, or their attempt at it, is tumult. Turn to the Virtues—how different the decree! Formed to connect, to blend, to associate, and to co-operate; bearing the same course, with kindred energies and harmonious sympathy, each perfect in its own lovely sphere, each moving in its wider or more contracted orbit, with different but concentreing powers, guided by the same influence of reason, and endeavouring at the same blessed end—the happiness of the individual, the harmony of the species, and the glory of the Creator. In the Vices, on the other hand, it is the discord that insures the defeat: each clamours to be heard in its own barbarous language; each claims the exclusive cunning of the brain; each thwarts and reproaches the other; and even while their fell rage assails with common hate the peace and virtue of the world, the civil war among their own tumultuous legions defeats the purpose of the foul conspiracy. These are the Furies of the mind, my lords, that unsettle the understanding; these are the Furies that destroy the virtue, Prudence; while the distracted brain and shivered intellect proclaim the tumult that is within, and bear their testimonies from the mouth of God Himself to the foul condition of the heart."

The part of the speech which occupied the third day (and which was interrupted by the sudden indisposition of Mr. Sheridan) consists chiefly of comments upon the affidavits taken before Sir Elijah Impey, in which the irrelevance and inconsistency of these documents is shrewdly exposed, and the dryness of detail, inseparable from such a task, enlivened by those light touches of conversational humour, and all that by-play of eloquence of which Mr. Sheridan was such a consum-

mate master. But it was on the fourth day of the oration that he rose into his most ambitious flights, and produced some of those dazzling bursts of declamation of which the traditional fame is most vividly preserved. Among the audience of that day was Gibbon, and the mention of his name in the following passage not only produced its effect at the moment, but, as connected with literary anecdote, will make the passage itself long memorable. Politics are of the day, but Literature is of all time; and, though it was in the power of the orator, in his brief moment of triumph, to throw a lustre over the historian by a passing epithet,* the name of the latter will, at the long-run, pay back the honour with interest. Having reprobated the violence and perfidy of the Governor-General, in forcing the Nabob to plunder his own relatives and friends, he adds:—

"I do say, that if you search the history of the world, you will not find an act of tyranny and fraud to surpass this; if you read all past histories, peruse the Annals of Tacitus, read the luminous page of Gibbon, and all the ancient or modern writers, that have searched into the depravity of former ages to draw a lesson for the present, you will not find an act of treacherous, deliberate, cool cruelty that could exceed this."

On being asked by some honest brother Whig, at the conclusion of the speech, how he came to compliment Gibbon with the epithet "luminous," Sheridan answered, in a half-whisper, "I said '*vo*luminous.'"

It is well known that the simile of the vulture and the lamb, which occurs in the address of Rolla to the Peruvians, had been previously employed by Mr. Sheridan, in this speech; and it showed a degree of indifference to criticism,—which criticism, it must be owned, not unfrequently deserves,—to reproduce before the public an image, so notorious both from

* Gibbon himself thought it an event worthy of record in his Memoirs. "Before my departure from England," he says, "I was present at the august spectacle of Mr. Hastings's trial in Westminster Hall. It is not my purpose to absolve or condemn the Governor of India; but Mr. Sheridan's eloquence demanded my applause; nor could I hear without emotion the personal compliment which he paid me in the presence of the British nation. From this display of genius, which blazed four successive days," &c., &c.

its application and its success. But, called upon as he was to levy, for the use of that drama, a hasty conscription of phrases and images, all of a certain altitude and pomp, this veteran simile, he thought, might be pressed into the service among the rest. The passage of the speech in which it occurs is left imperfect in the report:—

This is the character of all the protection ever afforded to the allies of Britain under the government of Mr. Hastings. They send their troops to drain the produce of industry, to seize all the treasures, wealth, and prosperity of the country, and then they call it Protection!—it is the protection of the vulture to the lamb. . . .

The following is his celebrated delineation of filial affection, to which reference is more frequently made than to any other part of the speech;—though the gross inaccuracy of the printed report has done its utmost to belie the reputation of the original passage, or rather has substituted a changeling to inherit its fame.

When I see in many of these letters the infirmities of age made a subject of mockery and ridicule; when I see the feelings of a son treated by Mr. Middleton as puerile and contemptible; when I see an order given from Mr. Hastings to harden that son's heart, to choke the struggling nature in his bosom; when I see them pointing to the son's name and to his standard, while marching to oppress the mother, as to a banner that gives dignity, that gives a holy sanction and a reverence to their enterprise; when I see and hear these things done—when I hear them brought into three deliberate Defences set up against the Charges of the Commons—my lords, I own I grow puzzled and confounded, and almost begin to doubt, whether, where such a defence can be offered, it may not be tolerated.

And yet, my lords, how can I support the claim of filial love by argument—much less the affection of a son to a mother—where love loses its awe, and veneration is mixed with tenderness? What can I say upon such a subject? what can I do but repeat the ready truths which, with the quick impulse of the mind, must spring to the lips of every man on such a theme? Filial Love! the morality of instinct, the sacrament

of nature and duty—or rather let me say, it is miscalled a duty, for it flows from the heart without effort, and is its delight, its indulgence, its enjoyment. It is guided, not by the slow dictates of reason; it awaits not encouragement from reflection, or from thought; it asks no aid of memory; it is an innate, but active, consciousness of having been the object of a thousand tender solicitudes, a thousand waking watchful cares, of meek anxiety and patient sacrifices, unremarked and unrequited by the object. It is a gratitude founded upon a conviction of obligations, not remembered, but the more binding because not remembered—because conferred before the tender reason could acknowledge, or the infant memory record, them—a gratitude and affection, which no circumstances should subdue, and which few can strengthen; a gratitude, in which even injury from the object, though it may blend regret, should never breed resentment; an affection which can be increased only by the decay of those to whom we owe it, and which is then most fervent when the tremulous voice of age, resistless in its feebleness, inquires for the natural protector of its cold decline.

"If these are the general sentiments of man, what must be their depravity, what must be their degeneracy, who can blot out and erase from the bosom the virtue that is deepest rooted in the human heart, and twined within the cords of life itself—aliens from nature, apostates from humanity! And yet, if there is a crime more fell, more foul—if there is anything worse than a wilful persecutor of his mother—it is to see a deliberate, reasoning instigator and abettor to the deed:—this it is that shocks, disgusts, and appals the mind more than the other—to view, not a wilful parricide, but a parricide by compulsion, a miserable wretch, not actuated by the stubborn evils of his own worthless heart, not driven by the fury of his own distracted brain, but lending his sacrilegious hand, without any malice of his own, to answer the abandoned purposes of the human fiends that have subdued his will! To condemn crimes like these, we need not talk of laws or of human rules—their foulness, their deformity, does not depend upon local constitutions, upon human institutes or religious creeds:—they are crimes—and the persons who perpetrate them are monsters who violate the primitive condition, upon which the earth was given to man,—they are guilty by the general verdict of human kind."

In some of the sarcasms we are reminded of the quaint contrasts of his dramatic style. Thus:—

"I must also do credit to them whenever I see anything like lenity in Mr. Middleton or his agent:—they do seem to admit here, that it was not worth while to commit a massacre for the discount of a small note of hand; and to put two thousand women and children to death, in order to procure prompt payment."

Of the length to which the language of crimination was carried, as well by Mr. Sheridan as by Mr. Burke, one example, out of many, will suffice. It cannot fail, however, to be remarked that, while the denunciations and invectives of Burke are filled throughout with a passionate earnestness, which leaves no doubt as to the sincerity of the hate and anger professed by him,—in Sheridan, whose nature was of a much gentler cast, the vehemence is evidently more in the words than in the feeling, the tone of indignation is theatrical and assumed, and the brightness of the flash seems to be more considered than the destructiveness of the fire:—

"It is this circumstance of deliberation and consciousness of his guilt—it is this that inflames the minds of those who watch his transactions, and roots out all pity for a person who could act under such an influence. We conceive of such tyrants as Caligula and Nero, bred up to tyranny and oppression, having had no equals to control them—no moment for reflection—we conceive that, if it could have been possible to seize the guilty profligates for a moment, you might bring conviction to their hearts and repentance to their minds. But when you see a cool, reasoning, deliberate tyrant—one who was not born and bred to arrogance,—who has been nursed in a mercantile line—who has been used to look round among his fellow-subjects—to transact business with his equals—to account for conduct to his master, and, by that wise system of the Company, to detail all his transactions—who never could fly one moment from himself, but must be obliged every night to sit down and hold up a glass to his own soul—who could never be blind to his deformity, and who must have brought his conscience not only to connive at but to approve of it—*this* it is that distinguishes it from the worst cruelties, the worst enormities of those who, born to tyranny, and finding no superior, no adviser, have gone to the last presumption that there were none above to control them hereafter. This is a circumstance

that aggravates the whole of the guilt of the unfortunate gentleman we are now arraigning at your bar."

We now come to the peroration, in which, skilfully and without appearance of design, it is contrived that the same sort of appeal to the purity of British justice, with which the oration opened, should, like the repetition of a solemn strain of music, recur at its close,—leaving in the minds of the judges a composed and concentrated feeling of the great public duty they had to perform, in deciding upon the arraignment of guilt brought before them. The Court of Directors, it appeared, had ordered an inquiry into the conduct of the Begums, with a view to the restitution of their property, if it should appear that the charges against them were unfounded; but to this proceeding Mr. Hastings objected, on the ground that the Begums themselves had not called for such interference in their favour, and that it was inconsistent with the "majesty of Justice" to condescend to volunteer her services. The pompous and Jesuitical style in which this singular doctrine* is expressed, in a letter addressed by the Governor-General to Mr. Macpherson, is thus ingeniously turned to account by the orator, in bringing his masterly statement to a close:—

"And now before I come to the last magnificent paragraph, let me call the attention of those who, possibly, think themselves capable of judging of the dignity and character of justice in this country; let me call the attention of those who, arrogantly perhaps, presume that they understand what the features, what the duties of justice are here and in India;—let them learn a lesson from this great statesman, this enlarged, this liberal philosopher:—'I hope I shall not depart from the simplicity of official language in saying, that the majesty of Justice ought to be approached with solicitation, not descend to provoke or invite it, much less to debase itself by the suggestion of wrongs and the promise of redress, with the denunciation of punishment before trial, and even before accusation."

* "If nothing" (says Mr. Mill) "remained to stain the reputation of Mr. Hastings but the principles avowed in this singular pleading, his character, among the friends of justice, would be sufficiently determined."

This is the exhortation which Mr. Hastings makes to his counsel. This is the character which he gives of British justice.

* * * * *

"But I will ask your lordships, do you approve this representation? Do you feel that this is the true image of Justice? Is this the character of British Justice? Are these her features? Is this her countenance? Is this her gait or her mien? No, I think even now I hear you calling upon me to turn from this vile libel, this base caricature, this Indian pagod, formed by the hand of guilty and knavish tyranny, to dupe the heart of ignorance,—to turn from this deformed idol to the true majesty of Justice here. *Here*, indeed, I see a different form, enthroned by the sovereign hand of Freedom,—awful without severity—commanding without pride—vigilant and active without restlessness or suspicion—searching and inquisitive without meanness or debasement—not arrogantly scorning to stoop to the voice of afflicted innocence, and in its loveliest attitude when bending to uplift the suppliant at its feet.

"It is by the majesty, by the form of that Justice, that I do conjure and implore your lordships to give your minds to this great business; that I exhort you to look, not so much to words which may be denied or quibbled away, but to the plain facts,—to weigh and consider the testimony in your own minds: we know the result must be inevitable. Let the truth appear and our cause is gained. It is this, I conjure your lordships, for your own honour, for the honour of the nation, for the honour of human nature, now entrusted to your care,—it is this duty that the Commons of England, speaking through us, claim at your hands.

"They exhort you to it by everything that calls sublimely upon the heart of man, by the majesty of that Justice which this bold man has libelled, by the wide fame of your own tribunal, by the sacred pledge by which you swear in the solemn hour of decision, knowing that that decision will then bring you the highest reward that ever blessed the heart of man, the consciousness of having done the greatest act of mercy for the world, that the earth has ever yet received from any hand but Heaven.—My lords, I have done."

Though I have selected some of the most remarkable passages of this speech, it would be unfair to judge of it even from these specimens. A report, *verbatim*, of any effective speech

must always appear diffuse and ungraceful in the perusal. The very repetitions, the redundancy, the accumulation of epithets, which gave force and momentum in the career of delivery, but weaken and encumber the march of the style, when read. There is, indeed, the same sort of difference between a faithful short-hand report, and those abridged and polished records which Burke has left us of his speeches, as there is between a cast taken directly from the face (where every line is accurately preserved, but all the blemishes and excrescences are in rigid preservation also), and a model, over which the correcting hand has passed, and all that was minute or superfluous is generalized and softened away.

EXTRACTS FROM VARIOUS SPEECHES.

It is singular that all the eminent English orators—with the exception of Mr. Burke and Mr. Windham—should have been so little anxious for the correct transmission of their eloquence to posterity. Had not Cicero taken more care of even his extemporaneous effusions, we should have lost that masterly burst of the moment, to which the clemency of Cæsar towards Marcellus gave birth. The beautiful fragments we have of Lord Chatham are rather traditional than recorded;—there are but two of the speeches of Mr. Pitt corrected by himself, those on the Budget of 1792, and on the Union with Ireland;—Mr. Fox committed to writing but one of his, namely, the tribute to the memory of the Duke of Bedford;—and the only speech of Mr. Sheridan that is known with certainty to have passed under his own revision, was that which he made at the opening of the session 1794, in answer to Lord Mornington.

It is not a little amusing to find him in one of his early speeches, gravely rebuking Mr. Rigby and Mr. Courtenay* for the levity and raillery with which they treated the subject before the House,—thus condemning the use of that weapon in other hands, which soon after became so formidable in his own.

* Feb. 26.—On the second reading of the Bill for the better regulation of his Majesty's Civil List Revenue.

The remarks by which Mr. Courtenay (a gentleman whose lively wit found afterwards a more congenial air on the benches of Opposition) provoked the reprimand of the new senator for Stafford, are too humorous to be passed over without, at least, a specimen of their spirit. In ridiculing the conduct of the Opposition, he observed:—

"Oh liberty! Oh virtue! Oh my country! had been the pathetic, though fallacious cry of former Oppositions; but the present, he was sure, acted on purer motives. They wept over their bleeding country, he had no doubt. Yet the patriot 'eye in a fine frenzy rolling' sometimes deigned to cast a wistful squint on the riches and honours enjoyed by the minister and his venal supporters. If he were not apprehensive of hazarding a ludicrous allusion (which he knew was always improper on a serious subject), he would compare their conduct to that of the sentimental alderman in one of Hogarth's prints, who, when his daughter is expiring, wears indeed a parental face of grief and solicitude, but it is to secure her diamond ring which he is drawing gently from her finger."

"Mr. Sheridan" (says the report) "rose and reprehended Mr. Courtenay for turning everything that passed into ridicule; for having introduced into the House a style of reasoning, in his opinion, every way unsuitable to the gravity and importance of the subjects that came under their discussion. If they would not act with dignity, he thought they might, at least, debate with decency. He would not attempt to answer Mr. Courtenay's arguments, for it was impossible seriously to reply to what, in every part, had an infusion of ridicule in it. Two of the honourable gentleman's similes, however, he must take notice of. The one was his having insinuated that the Opposition was envious of those who basked in court sunshine; and desirous merely to get into their places. He begged leave to remind the honourable gentleman that, though the sun afforded a genial warmth, it also occasioned an intemperate heat, that tainted and infected everything it reflected on. That this excessive heat tended to corrupt as well as to cherish; to putrefy as well as to animate; to dry and soak up the wholesome juices of the body politic, and turn the whole of it into one mass of corruption. If those, therefore, who sat near him did not enjoy so genial a warmth as the honourable gentleman, and those who like him kept close to the noble lord in the

blue ribbon, he was certain they breathed a purer air, an air less infected and less corrupt."

In one of his answers to Burke on the subject of the French Revolution in 1793, adverting to the charge of Deism and Atheism brought against the republicans, he says:—

"As an argument to the feelings and passions of men, the honourable member had great advantages in dwelling on this topic; because it was a subject which those who disliked everything that had the air of cant and profession on the one hand, or of indifference on the other, found it awkward to meddle with. Establishments, tests, and matters of that nature, were proper objects of political discussion in that House, but not general charges of Atheism and Deism, as pressed upon their consideration by the honourable gentleman. Thus far, however, he would say, and it was an opinion he had never changed or concealed, that, although no man can command his conviction, he had ever considered a deliberate disposition to make proselytes in infidelity as an unaccountable depravity. Whoever attempted to pluck the belief or the prejudice on this subject, style it which he would, from the bosom of one man, woman, or child, committed a brutal outrage, the motive for which he had never been able to trace or conceive."

In the speech upon his own motion relative to the existence of seditious practices in the country, also in 1793, there is some lively ridicule upon the panic then prevalent. For instance:—

"The alarm had been brought forward in great pomp and form on Saturday morning. At night all the mail-coaches were stopped; the Duke of Richmond stationed himself, among other curiosities, at the Tower; a great municipal officer, too, had made a discovery exceedingly beneficial to the people of this country. He meant the Lord Mayor of London, who had found out that there was at the King's Arms in Cornhill a debating society, where principles of the most dangerous tendency were propagated; where people went to buy treason at sixpence a head; where it was retailed to them by the glimmering of an inch of candle; and five minutes, to be measured by the glass, were allowed to each traitor to perform his part in overturning the State."

It was in the same speech that he gave the well-known and

happy turn to the motto of the *Sun* newspaper, which was at that time known to be the organ of the Alarmists. "There is one paper, he remarked, in particular, said to be the property of members of that House, and published and conducted under their immediate direction, which had for its motto a garbled part of a beautiful sentence, when it might, with much propriety, have assumed the whole—

"*Solem quis dicere falsum*
Audeat? Ille etiam cæcos instare tumultus
Sæpe monet, fraudemque et operta tumescere bella."

The following is an extract from Sheridan's speech on the army estimates at the commencement of the session of 1790, which caused the breach of friendship between himself and Mr. Burke.

"He differed," he said, "decidedly, from his right honourable friend in almost every word that he had uttered respecting the French Revolution. He conceived it to be as just a Revolution as ours, proceeding upon as sound a principle and as just a provocation. He vehemently defended the general views and conduct of the National Assembly. He could not even understand what was meant by the charges against them of having overturned the laws, the justice, and the revenues of their country. What were the laws? the arbitrary mandates of capricious despotism. What their justice? the partial adjudications of venal magistrates. What their revenues? national bankruptcy. This he thought the fundamental error of his right honourable friend's argument, that he accused the National Assembly of creating the evils, which they had found existing in full deformity at the first hour of their meeting. The public creditor had been defrauded; the manufacturer was without employ; trade was languishing; famine clung upon the poor; despair on all. In this situation, the wisdom and feelings of the nation were appealed to by the government; and was it to be wondered at by Englishmen, that a people, so circumstanced, should search for the cause and source of all their calamities, or that they should find them in the arbitrary constitution of their government, and in the prodigal and corrupt administration of their revenues? For such an evil, when proved, what remedy could be resorted to, but a radical amendment of

the frame and fabric of the constitution itself? This change was not the object and wish of the National Assembly only; it was the claim and cry of all France, united as one man for one purpose."

The cruelties which disgraced the commencement of the French Revolution were ascribed by the orator not to the want of moral principle or of legal restraint, but to "a superior abhorrence of that accursed system of despotic government, which had so deformed and corrupted human nature, as to make its subjects capable of such acts; a government that set at naught the property, the liberty, and lives of the subjects; a government that dealt in extortion, dungeons, and tortures, setting an example of depravity to the slaves over which it ruled: when therefore the day of power came to the wretched populace, it was not to be wondered at, however much it might be regretted, that they should act without those feelings of justice and humanity of which they had been stripped by the principles and practices of their governors."

At the opening of the session of 1794, Mr. Sheridan delivered his admirable answer to Lord Mornington, the report of which was corrected for publication by himself. In this fine speech, of which the greater part must have been unprepared, there is a natural earnestness of feeling and argument, that is well contrasted with the able but artificial harangue that preceded it. In referring to the details which Lord Mornington had entered into of the various atrocities committed in France, he says:—

"But what was the sum of all that he had told the House? that great and dreadful enormities had been committed, at which the heart shuddered, and which not merely wounded every feeling of humanity, but disgusted and sickened the soul. All this was most true; but what did all this prove? What, but that eternal and unalterable truth which had always presented itself to his mind, in whatever way he had viewed the subject, namely, that a long-established despotism so far degraded and debased human nature, as to render its subjects, on the first recovery of their rights, unfit for the exercise of them. But never had he, nor would he meet but with reprobation that

mode of argument which went, in fact, to establish, as an inference from this truth, that those who had been long slaves, ought, therefore, to remain so for ever! No; the lesson ought to be, he would again repeat, a tenfold horror of that despotic form of government, which had so profaned and changed the nature of civilized man, and a still more jealous apprehension of any system tending to withhold the rights and liberties of our fellow-creatures. Such a form of government might be considered as twice cursed; while it existed, it was solely responsible for the miseries and calamities of its subjects; and should a day of retribution come, and the tyranny be destroyed, it was equally to be charged with all the enormities which the folly or frenzy of those who overturned it should commit.

"But the madness of the French people was not confined to their proceedings within their own country; we, and all the Powers of Europe, had to dread it. True; but was not this also to be accounted for? Wild and unsettled as their state of mind was, necessarily, upon the events which had thrown such power so suddenly into their hands, the surrounding States had goaded them into a still more savage state of madness, fury, and desperation. We had unsettled their reason, and then reviled their insanity; we drove them to the extremities that produced the evils we arraigned; we baited them like wild beasts, until at length we made them so. The conspiracy of Pilnitz, and the brutal threats of the royal abettors of that plot against the rights of nations and of men, had, in truth, to answer for all the additional misery, horrors, and iniquity which had since disgraced and incensed humanity. Such has been your conduct towards France, that you have created the passions which you persecute; you mark a nation to be cut off from the world; you covenant for their extermination; you swear to hunt them in their inmost recesses; you load them with every species of execration; and you now come forth with whining declamations on the horror of their turning upon you with the fury which you inspired."

Having alluded to an assertion of Condorcet, quoted by Lord Mornington, that "Revolutions are always the work of the minority," he adds livelily:—

"If this be true, it certainly is a most ominous thing for the enemies of reform in England; for, if it holds true, of necessity, that the minority still prevails, in national contests, it must be a consequence that the smaller the minority the more certain

must be the success. In what a dreadful situation, then, must the noble lord be and all the alarmists! for never, surely, was a minority so small, so thin in number, as the present. Conscious, however, that M. Condorcet was mistaken in our object, I am glad to find that we are terrible in proportion as we are few; I rejoice that the liberality of secession which has thinned our ranks has only served to make us more formidable. The alarmists will hear this with new apprehensions; they will no doubt return to us with a view to diminish our force, and encumber us with their alliance in order to reduce us to insignificance."

It was at this time evident that the great Whig seceders would soon yield to the invitations of Mr. Pitt and the vehement persuasions of Burke, and commit themselves still further with the Administration by accepting of office. Mr. Sheridan was naturally indignant at these desertions, and his bitterness overflows in many passages of the speech before us. Lord Mornington having contrasted the privations and sacrifices demanded of the French by their Minister of Finance with those required of the English nation, he says, in answer:—

"The noble lord need not remind us that there is no great danger of our Chancellor of the Exchequer making any such experiment. I can more easily fancy another sort of speech for our prudent minister. I can more easily conceive him modestly comparing himself and his own measures with the character and conduct of his rival, and saying, 'Do I demand of you, wealthy citizens, to lend your hoards to Government without interest? On the contrary, when I shall come to propose a loan, there is not a man of you to whom I shall not hold out at least a job in every part of the subscription, and an usurious profit upon every pound you devote to the necessities of your country. Do I demand of you, my fellow-placemen and brother-pensioners, that you should sacrifice any part of your stipends to the public exigency? On the contrary, am I not daily increasing your emoluments and your numbers in proportion as the country becomes unable to provide for you? Do I require of you, my latest and most zealous proselytes—of you who have come over to me for the special purpose of supporting the war—a war, on the success of which you solemnly protest that the salvation of Britain, and of civil society itself, depends—do I require of you, that you should make a temporary sacrifice, in the cause of human nature, of the greater part of your private incomes?

No, gentlemen; I scorn to take advantage of the eagerness of your zeal; and to prove that I think the sincerity of your attachment to me needs no such test, I will make your interest co-operate with your principle: I will quarter many of you on the public supply, instead of calling on you to contribute to it; and, while their whole thoughts are absorbed in patriotic apprehensions for their country, I will dexterously force upon others the favourite objects of the vanity or ambition of their lives.' * * * * *

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"Good God, sir, that he should have thought it prudent to have forced this contrast upon our attention; that he should triumphantly remind us of everything that shame should have withheld, and caution would have buried in oblivion! Will those who stood forth with a parade of disinterested patriotism, and vaunted of the *sacrifices* they have made, and the *exposed situation* they had chosen, in order the better to oppose the friends of Brissot in England—will they thank the noble lord for reminding us how soon these lofty professions dwindled into little jobbing pursuits for followers and dependents, as unfit to fill the offices procured for them, as the offices themselves were unfit to be created? Will the train of newly-titled alarmists, of supernumerary negotiators, of pensioned paymasters, agents and commissaries, thank him for remarking to us how profitable their panic has been to themselves, and how expensive to the country? What a contrast, indeed, do we exhibit! What! in such an hour as this, at a moment pregnant with the national fate, when, pressing as the exigency may be, the hard task of squeezing the money from the pockets of an impoverished people, from the toil, the drudgery of the shivering poor, must make the most practised collector's heart ache while he tears it from them—can it be that people of high rank, and professing high principles, that *they* or *their families* should seek to thrive on the spoils of misery, and fatten on the meals wrested from industrious poverty? Can it be that this should be the case with the very persons who state the *unprecedented peril of the country* as the *sole* cause of their being found in the ministerial ranks? The Constitution is in danger, religion is in danger, the very existence of the nation itself is endangered; all personal and party considerations ought to vanish; the war must be supported by every possible exertion, and by every possible sacrifice; the people must not murmur at their burdens—it is for their salvation, their all is at stake. The time is come when all honest and disinterested men should rally round the throne as

round a standard;—for what? ye honest and disinterested men, to receive, for your own private emolument, a portion of those very taxes wrung from the people, on the pretence of saving them from the poverty and distress which you say the enemy would inflict, but which you take care no enemy shall be able to aggravate. Oh! shame! shame! is this a time for selfish intrigues, and the little dirty traffic for lucre and emolument? Does it suit the honour of a gentleman to ask at such a moment? Does it become the honesty of a Minister to grant? Is it intended to confirm the pernicious doctrine, so industriously propagated by many, that all public men are impostors, and that every politician has his price? Or even where there is no principle in the bosom, why does not prudence hint to the mercenary and the vain to abstain a while at least, and wait the fitting of the times? Improvident impatience! Nay, even from those who seem to have no direct object of office or profit, what is the language which their actions speak? The throne is in danger! 'We will support the throne, but let us share the smiles of royalty.' The order of nobility is in danger! 'I will fight for nobility,' says the viscount, 'but my zeal would be much greater if I were made an earl.' 'Rouse all the marquis within me,' exclaims the earl, 'and the peerage never turned forth a more undaunted champion in its cause than I shall prove.' 'Stain my green riband blue,' cries out the illustrious knight, 'and the fountain of honour will have a fast and faithful servant.' What are the people to think of our sincerity? What credit are they to give to our professions? Is this system to be persevered in? Is there nothing that whispers to that right honourable gentleman that the crisis is too big, that the times are too gigantic, to be ruled by the little hackneyed and every-day means of ordinary corruption?"

In 1795 the most active and notorious of the patronized advocates of the court was Mr. John Reeves—a person who, in his capacity of President of the Association against Republicans and Levellers, had acted as a sort of Sub-minister of Alarm to Mr. Burke. In a pamphlet, entitled "Thoughts on the English Government," which Mr. Sheridan brought under the notice of the House, as a libel on the constitution, this pupil of the school of Filmer advanced the startling doctrine that the Lords and Commons of England derive their existence and authority from the king, and that the kingly government

could go on, in all its functions, without them. This pitiful paradox found an apologist in Mr. Windham, whose chivalry in the new cause he had espoused left Mr. Pitt himself at a wondering distance behind. His speeches in defence of Reeves (which are among the proofs that remain of that want of equipoise observable in his fine, rather than solid understanding) have been, with a judicious charity towards his memory, omitted in the authentic collection by Mr. Amyot.

In one of Mr. Sheridan's speeches on the subject of Reeves's libel, there are some remarks on the character of the people of England, not only candid and just, but, as applied to them at that trying crisis, interesting :—

"Never was there," he said, "any country in which there was so much absence of public principle, and at the same time so many instances of private worth. Never was there so much charity and humanity towards the poor and the distressed ; any act of cruelty or oppression never failed to excite a sentiment of general indignation against its authors. It was a circumstance peculiarly strange, that though luxury had arrived at such a pitch, it had so little effect in depraving the hearts and destroying the morals of people in private life ; and almost every day produced some fresh example of generous feelings and noble exertions of benevolence. Yet, amidst these phenomena of private virtue, it was to be remarked, that there was an almost total want of public spirit, and a most deplorable contempt of public principle. * * * *
When Great Britain fell, the case would not be with her as with Rome in former times. When Rome fell, she fell by the weight of her own vices. The inhabitants were so corrupted and degraded, as to be unworthy of a continuance of prosperity, and incapable to enjoy the blessings of liberty ; their minds were bent to the state in which a reverse of fortune placed them. But when Great Britain falls, she will fall with a people full of private worth and virtue ; she will be ruined by the profligacy of the governors, and the security of her inhabitants,—the consequence of those pernicious doctrines which have taught her to place a false confidence in her strength and freedom, and not to look with distrust and apprehension to the misconduct and corruption of those to whom she has trusted the management of her resources."

The marriage of the Prince of Wales to the Princess Caroline of Brunswick having taken place, it was proposed, by his Majesty to Parliament, not only to provide an establishment for their Royal Highnesses, but to decide on the best manner of liquidating the debts of the prince, which were calculated at £630,000. On the secession of the leading Whigs, in 1792, his Royal Highness had also separated himself from Mr. Fox, and held no further intercourse either with him or any of his party,—except, occasionally, Mr. Sheridan,—till so late as the year 1798. The effects of this estrangement are sufficiently observable in the tone of the Opposition throughout the debates on the message of the king. Mr. Grey said, that he would not oppose the granting of an establishment to the prince equal to that of his ancestors; but neither would he consent to the payment of his debts by Parliament. A refusal, he added, to liberate his Royal Highness from his embarrassments would certainly prove a mortification; but it would, at the same time, awaken a just sense of his imprudence. Mr. Fox asked, "Was the prince well advised in applying to that House on the subject of his debts, after the promise made in 1787?"—and Mr. Sheridan, while he agreed with his friends that the application should not have been made to Parliament, still gave it as his "positive opinion that the debts ought to be paid immediately, for the dignity of the country and the situation of the prince, who ought not to be seen rolling about the streets, in his state-coach, as an insolvent prodigal." With respect to the promise given in 1787, and now violated, that the prince would not again apply to Parliament for the payment of his debts, Mr. Sheridan, with a communicativeness that seemed hardly prudent, put the House in possession of some details of the transaction, which, as giving an insight into royal character, are worthy of being extracted.

"In 1787 a pledge was given to the House that no more debts should be contracted. By that pledge the prince was bound as much as if he had given it knowingly and voluntarily. To attempt any explanation of it now would be unworthy of his honour,—as if he had suffered it to be wrung from him,

with a view of afterwards pleading that it was against his better judgment, in order to get rid of it. He then advised the prince not to make any such promise, because it was not to be expected that he could himself enforce the details of a system of economy; and, although he had men of honour and abilities about him, he was totally unprovided with men of business, adequate to such a task. The prince said he could not give such a pledge, and agree at the same time to take back his establishment. He (Mr. Sheridan) drew up a plan of retrenchment, which was approved of by the prince, and afterwards by his Majesty; and the prince told him that the promise was not to be insisted upon. In the king's message, however, the promise was inserted,—by whose advice he knew not. He heard it read with surprise, and, on being asked next day by the prince to contradict it in his place, he inquired whether the prince had seen the message before it was brought down. Being told that it had been read to him, but that he did not understand it as containing a promise, he declined contradicting it, and told the prince that he must abide by it, in whatever way it might have been obtained. By the plan then settled, ministers had a check upon the prince's expenditure, which they never exerted, nor enforced adherence to the plan. * * * * * * * While ministers never interfered to check expenses, of which they could not pretend ignorance, the prince had recourse to means for relieving himself from his embarrassments, which ultimately tended to increase them. It was attempted to raise a loan for him in foreign countries, a measure which he thought unconstitutional, and put a stop to; and, after a consultation with Lord Loughborough, all the bonds were burnt, although with a considerable loss to the prince. After that, another plan of retrenchment was proposed, upon which he had frequent consultations with Lord Thurlow, who gave the prince fair, open, and manly advice. That noble lord told the prince, that, after the promise he had made, he must not think of applying to Parliament:—that he must avoid being of any party in politics, but, above all, exposing himself to the suspicion of being influenced in political opinion by his embarrassments;—that the only course he could pursue with honour, was to retire from public life for a time, and appropriate the greater part of his income to the liquidation of his debts. This plan was agreed upon in the autumn of 1792. Why, it might be asked, was it not carried into effect? About that period his Royal Highness began to receive unsolicited advice from another quarter. He was told by

Lord Loughborough, both in words and in writing, that the plan favoured too much of the advice given to M. Egalité, and he could guess from what quarter it came. For his own part, he was then of opinion, that to have avoided meddling in the great political questions which were then coming to be discussed, and to have put his affairs in a train of adjustment, would have better become his high station, and tended more to secure public respect to it, than the pageantry of state-liveries."

The following is an extract from a speech which Mr. Sheridan delivered in the June of 1798, on the rebellion in Ireland.

"What! when conciliation was held out to the people of Ireland, was there any discontent? When the Government of Ireland was agreeable to the people, was there any discontent? After the prospect of that conciliation was taken away,—after Lord Fitzwilliam was recalled,—after the hopes which had been raised were blasted,—when the spirit of the people was beaten down, insulted, despised, I will ask any gentleman to point out a single act of conciliation which has emanated from the Government of Ireland? On the contrary, has not that country exhibited one continual scene of the most grievous oppression, of the most vexatious proceedings; arbitrary punishments inflicted; torture declared necessary by the highest authority in the sister-kingdom next to that of the legislature? And do gentlemen say that the indignant spirit which is roused by such exercise of government is unprovoked? Is this conciliation? is this lenity? Has everything been done to avert the evils of rebellion? It is the fashion to say, and the Address holds the same language, that the rebellion which now rages in the sister-kingdom has been owing to the machinations of 'wicked men.' Agreeing to the amendment proposed, it was my first intention to move that these words should be omitted. But, sir, the fact they assert is true. It is, indeed, to the measures of wicked men that the deplorable state of Ireland is to be imputed. It is to those wicked ministers who have broken the promises they held out; who betrayed the party they seduced into their views, to be the instruments of the foulest treachery that ever was practised against any people. It is to those wicked ministers who have given up that devoted country to plunder,—resigned it a prey to this faction, by which it has so long been trampled upon, and abandoned it to every species of insult and oppression by which a country was ever overwhelmed, or the spirit of a people insulted, that we

owe the miseries into which Ireland is plunged, and the dangers by which England is threatened. These evils are the doings of wicked ministers, and applied to them, the language of the Address records a fatal and melancholy truth."

In Mr. Sheridan's speech opposing Mr. Pitt's bill for increasing the assessed taxes, January 4th, 1798, the following vehement burst of eloquence occurs :—

"But we have gained, forsooth, several ships by the victory of the first of June,—by the capture of Toulon,—by the acquisition of those charnel-houses in the West Indies, in which 50,000 men have been lost to this country. Consider the price which has been paid for these successes. For these boasted successes, I will say, give me back the blood of Englishmen which has been shed in this fatal contest,—give me back the 250 millions of debt which it has occasioned,—give me back the honour of the country, which has been tarnished,—give me back the credit of the country, which has been destroyed,—give me back the solidity of the Bank of England, which has been overthrown; the attachment of the people to their ancient constitution, which has been shaken by acts of oppression and tyrannical laws,—give me back the kingdom of Ireland, the connection of which is endangered by a cruel and outrageous system of military coercion,—give me back that pledge of eternal war, which must be attended with inevitable ruin!"

In a speech on the probability of a French invasion, delivered on the 26th April, 1798, Mr. Sheridan said :—

"If the French are determined to invade us, they will, no doubt, come furnished with flaming manifestoes. The Directory will probably instruct their generals to make the fairest professions of the manner in which their army will act; but of these professions surely no one can be believed. Some, however, may deceive themselves by supposing that the great Buonaparte will have concerted with the Directory that he is not to tarnish his laurels, or sully his glory, by permitting his soldiers to plunder our banks, to ruin our commerce, to enslave our people; but that he is to come, like a minister of grace, with no other purpose than to give peace to the cottager, to restore citizens to their rights, to establish real freedom, and a liberal and humane government. This undoubtedly were noble; this were generous; this, I had almost said, were god-like. But

can there be supposed an Englishman so stupid, so besotted, so befooled, as to give a moment's credit to such ridiculous professions? Not that I deny but that a great republic may be actuated by these generous principles, and by a thirst of glory for glory's sake. Such, I might be induced to believe, was the spirit which inspired the Romans in the early and virtuous periods of their republic. They fought and conquered for the meed of warlike renown. Still sooner would I believe that the Spartan heroes fought for fame only, and not for the plunder of wealth and luxury, which they were more ready to exclude from than to introduce into the bosom of their republic. But far otherwise are we to interpret the objects that whet the valour and stimulate the prowess of modern republicans. Do we not see they have planted the tree of liberty in the garden of monarchy, where it still continues to produce the same rare and luxurious fruit? Do we not see the French republicans as eager as ever were the courtly friends of the monarchy, to collect from among the vanquished countries, and to accumulate all the elegances, all the monuments of the arts and sciences; determined to make their capital the luxurious mart and school for a subject and admiring world? It is not glory they seek, for they are already gorged with it; it is not territory they grasp at, they are already encumbered with the extent they have acquired. What, then, is their object? They come for what they really want; they come for ships, for commerce, for credit, and for capital. Yes, they come for the sinews, the bones, for the marrow, and for the very heart's blood of Great Britain. But now," said Mr. Sheridan, "let us examine what we are to purchase at this price. It is natural for a merchant to look closely to the quality of the article which he is about to buy at a high rate. Liberty, it appears, is now their staple commodity; but should we not carefully attend, whether what they export be not of the same kind with what they keep for their home consumption? Attend, I say, and examine how little of real liberty they themselves enjoy, who are so forward and prodigal in bestowing it on others. On this subject I do not touch as a matter of reproach. The unjust measures they have pursued they may have pursued from necessity. If the majority of the French people are desirous and determined to continue a republican form of government, the Directory must do what they can to secure the republic. This conduct, both prudence, policy, and a view to their own security, may dictate and enforce. But were they to perform the fair promises which they would fain hold out to us,

they would then establish more liberty here than they themselves enjoy in France. Were they to leave us the trial by jury uninterrupted, and thus grant us a constitution more enviable than their own, would not this be rearing a fabric here which would stand as a glaring contrast, and prove a lasting reproach to their own country?"

Towards the conclusion of this most eloquent and patriotic speech, which united the warmth of Demosthenes with the nerve of Cicero, the orator touched upon the best means of opposing a successful resistance to an enemy of this temper and disposition. "I will not," said he, "here require of ministers to lay aside their political prejudices or animosities; neither will I require of those who oppose them altogether to suspend theirs; but both must feel that this sacrifice is necessary, at least, on one point, resistance to the enemy, and upon this subject I must entreat them to accord; for here it is necessary that they should both act with one heart and one hand. If there be any who say we will oppose the French when we have succeeded in removing the present ministers, to them I would say:—'Sirs, let us defer that for a moment; let us now oppose the enemy and avert the storm, otherwise we shall not long have even ministers to combat and remove.' If there be any who say that ministers have brought our present calamities on us, and that they ought, therefore, to be first removed, I will grant them that there is justice and logic in the argument; but its policy I am at a loss to discover. There are those who think the present ministers incapable, and that they should on that account be displaced. Granted: but if they cannot succeed in removing them, and if they be sincere in their opinion of the incapacity of ministers, how can they approve themselves sincere in their wish to resist the enemy, unless they contribute to aid and rectify the incapacity of which they complain? There are, however, some gentlemen who seem to divide their enmity and opposition between ministers and the French; but do they not see that the inevitable consequence of this division must be the conquest of the country? Why then do they thus hesitate about which side of the question they ought to take? Can there be anything more childish than to say, I will wait until the enemy has landed, and then I will resist them; as if preparation was no essential part of effectual resistance? What more childish and ridiculous than to say, I will take a pistol and fire at them; but I will not go the length of a musket; no: I will attack them with my left, but I will not exert my right hand against them? All must unite, all must go every length

against them, or there can be no hopes; and already I rejoice to see the necessary spirit begin to rise throughout the country and the metropolis; and when on this side of the House we manifest this spirit, and forget all other motives to action, I trust the same sentiments will prevail on the other; and that the offers we make sincerely will be accepted unreluctantly. But now I must observe, that the defence of the country might be essentially aided by two very different classes of men; the one composed of those sturdy, hulking fellows whom we daily see behind coaches, or following through the streets and squares their masters and mistresses, who, in the meantime, perhaps, are ruminating on the evils of an invasion; to such I would entrust the defence of the capital, and would add to them the able-bodied men which the different offices might easily produce. There is another class I would also beg leave to mention; and those are young gentlemen of high rank, who are daily mounted on horses of high blood. They surely, at this perilous moment, might be better employed; though it would ill become me to erect myself into a rigid censor of amusement and dissipation. That line of argument would not exactly suit my own line of conduct; nor am I an enemy to their amusements; on the contrary: but their mornings might now be more usefully devoted in preparing for the great task which they will have to perform; for sure I am, they possess a spirit that will not permit them to skulk and hide their heads from the storm; they will scorn to be seen a miserable train of emigrants wandering and despised in a foreign land."

Of his speeches in 1800,—during which year, on account, perhaps, of the absence of Mr. Fox from the House, he was particularly industrious, I shall select a few brief specimens for the reader. On the question of the Grant to the Emperor of Germany, he said:—

"I do think, sir, Jacobin principles never existed much in this country; and, even admitting they had, I say they have been found so hostile to true liberty, that, in proportion as we love it (and, whatever may be said, I must still consider liberty an inestimable blessing), we must hate and detest these principles. But, more,—I do not think they even exist in France. They have there died the best of deaths; a death I am more pleased to see than if it had been effected by foreign force, —they have stung themselves to death, and died by their own poison."

The following is a concise and just summary of the causes and effects of the French Revolutionary War:—

"France, in the beginning of the Revolution, had conceived many romantic notions; she was to put an end to war, and produce, by a pure form of government, a perfectibility of mind which before had never been realized. The monarchs of Europe, seeing the prevalence of these new principles, trembled for their thrones. France, also, perceiving the hostility of kings to her projects, supposed she could not be a republic without the overthrow of thrones. Such has been the regular progress of cause and effect; but who was the first aggressor, with whom the jealousy first arose need not now be a matter of discussion. Both the republic and the monarchs who opposed her acted on the same principles;—the latter said they must exterminate Jacobins, and the former that they must destroy monarchs. From this source have all the calamities of Europe flowed; and it is now a waste of time and argument to inquire farther into the subject."

Adverting, in his speech on the Negotiation with France, to the overtures that had been made for a maritime truce, he says, with that national feeling which rendered him at this time so popular,—

"No consideration for our ally, no hope of advantage to be derived from joint negotiation, should have induced the English Government to think for a moment of interrupting the course of our naval triumphs.—This measure, sir, would have broken the heart of the navy, and would have damped all its future exertions. How would our gallant sailors have felt, when, chained to their decks like galley-slaves, they saw the enemy's vessels sailing under their bows in security, and proceeding, without a possibility of being molested, to revictual those places which had been so long blockaded by their astonishing skill, perseverance, and valour? We never stood more in need of their services, and their feelings at no time deserved to be more studiously consulted. The north of Europe presents to England a most awful and threatening aspect. Without giving an opinion as to the origin of these hostile dispositions, or pronouncing decidedly whether they are wholly ill founded, I hesitate not to say, that if they have been excited because we have insisted upon enforcing the old-established maritime law of Europe,—because we stood boldly forth in defence of indis-

putable privileges,—because we have refused to abandon the source of our prosperity, the pledge of our security, and the foundation of our naval greatness,—they ought to be disregarded or set at defiance. If we are threatened to be deprived of that which is the charter of our existence, which has procured us the commerce of the world, and been the means of spreading our glory over every land,—if the rights and honours of our flag are to be called in question, every risk should be run, and every danger braved. Then we should have a legitimate cause of war;—then the heart of every Briton would burn with indignation, and his hand be stretched forth in defence of his country. If our flag is to be insulted, let us nail it to the top-mast of the nation; there let it fly while we shed the last drop of our blood in protecting it, and let it be degraded only when the nation itself is overwhelmed."

He thus ridicules, in the same speech, the etiquette that had been observed in the selection of the ministers who were to confer with M. Otto:—

"This stiff-necked policy shows insincerity. I see Mr. Nepean and Mr. Hammond also appointed to confer with M. Otto, because they are of the same rank. Is not this as absurd as if Lord Whitworth were to be sent to Petersburgh, and told that he was not to treat but with some gentleman of six feet high, and as handsome as himself? Sir, I repeat that this is a stiff-necked policy, when the lives of thousands are at stake."

In the following year Mr. Pitt was succeeded, as prime minister, by Mr. Addington. The cause assigned for this unexpected change was the difference of opinion that existed between the king and Mr. Pitt, with respect to the further enfranchisement of the Catholics of Ireland. To this measure the minister and some of his colleagues considered themselves to have been pledged by the Act of Union; but, on finding that they could not carry it, against the scruples of their royal master, resigned.

During the early part of the new administration, Mr. Sheridan appears to have rested on his arms,—having spoken so rarely and briefly throughout the session as not to have furnished to the collector of his speeches a single specimen of

oratory worth recording. It is not till the discussion of the Definitive Treaty, in May, 1802, that he is represented as having professed himself friendly to the existing ministry:—"Certainly," he said, "I have in several respects given my testimony in favour of the present ministry,—in nothing more than for making the best peace, perhaps, they could after their predecessors had left them in such a deplorable situation." It was on this occasion, however, that in ridiculing the understanding supposed to exist between the ex-minister and his successor, he left such marks of his wit on the latter as all his subsequent friendship could not efface. Among other remarks, full of humour, he said,—

I should like to support the present minister on fair ground; but what is he? a sort of *outside passenger*,—or rather a man leading the horses round a corner, while reins, whip, and all, are in the hands of the coachman on the *box!* (*looking at Mr. Pitt's elevated seat, three or four benches above that of the Treasury.*) Why not have an union of the two ministers, or, at least, some intelligible connection? When the ex-minister quitted office, almost all the *subordinate* ministers kept their places. How was it that the whole family did not move together? Had he only one *covered waggon* to carry *friends and goods*? or has he left directions behind him that they may know where to call? I remember a fable of *Aristophanes's*, which is translated from Greek into decent English.—I mention this for the country gentlemen. It is of a man that sat so long on a seat (about as long, perhaps, as the ex-minister did on the Treasury-bench), that he grew to it. When Hercules pulled him off, he left all the sitting part of the man behind him. The House can make the allusion."

The following is another highly humorous passage from this speech:—

"But let France have colonies! Oh, yes! let her have a good trade, that she may be afraid of war, says the learned member,—that's the way to make Buonaparte love peace. He has had, to be sure, a sort of military education. He has been abroad, and is rather *rough company;* but if you put him behind the *counter* a little, he will mend exceedingly. When I was reading the treaty, I thought all the names of foreign places,

viz., Pondicherry, Chandenagore, Cochin, Martinico, &c., all *cessions*. Not they,—they are all so many *traps* and *holes* to catch this silly fellow in, and make a *merchant* of him! I really think the best way upon this principle would be this:—let the merchants of London open a *public subscription*, and set him up at once. I hear a great deal respecting a certain *statue* about to be erected to the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) now in my eye, at a great expense. Send all that money over to the First Consul, and give him, what you talk of so much, *Capital*, to begin trade with. I hope the right honourable gentleman over the way will, like the First Consul, refuse a statue for the present, and postpone it as a work to posterity. There is no harm, however, in marking out the place. The right honourable gentleman is musing, perhaps, on what square, or place, he will choose for its erection. I recommend the *Bank of England*. Now for the material. Not gold: no, no!—he has not left enough of it. I should, however, propose *papier maché* and old bank-notes!"

A few extracts from the speech of Mr. Sheridan upon the Additional Force Bill,—the only occasion on which he seems to have spoken during the year 1804,—will show that the rarity of his displays was not owing to any failure of power, but rather, perhaps, to the increasing involvement of his circumstances, which left no time for the thought and preparation that all his public efforts required.

Mr. Pitt had, at the commencement of this year, condescended to call to his aid the co-operation of Mr. Addington, Lord Buckinghamshire, and other members of that adminstration, which had withered away, but a few months before, under the blight of his sarcasm and scorn. In alluding to this coalition, Sheridan says:—

"The right honourable gentleman went into office alone;—but, lest the government should become too full of vigour from his support, he thought proper to beckon back some of the weakness of the former administration. He, I suppose, thought that the ministry became, from his support, like spirits above proof, and required to be diluted; that, like gold refined to a certain degree, it would be unfit for use without a certain mixture of alloy; that the administration would be too brilliant

and dazzle the House, unless he called back a certain part of the mist and fog of the last administration to render it tolerable to the eye. As to the great change made in the ministry by the introduction of the right honourable gentleman himself, I would ask, does he imagine that he came back to office with the same estimation that he left it? I am sure he is much mistaken if he fancies that he did. The right honourable gentleman retired from office because, as was stated, he could not carry an important question, which he deemed necessary to satisfy the just claims of the Catholics; and in going out he did not hesitate to tear off the sacred veil of majesty, describing his sovereign as the only person that stood in the way of this desirable object. After the right honourable gentleman's retirement, he advised the Catholics to look to no one but him for the attainment of their rights, and cautiously to abstain from forming a connection with any other person. But how does it appear, now that the right honourable gentleman is returned to office? He declines to perform his promise; and has received, as his colleagues in office, those who are pledged to resist the measure. Does not the right honourable gentleman then feel that he comes back to office with a character degraded by the violation of a solemn pledge, given to a great and respectable body of the people, upon a particular and momentous occasion? Does the right honourable gentleman imagine either that he returns to office with the same character for political wisdom, after the description which he gave of the talents and capacity of his predecessors, and after having shown by his own actions, that his description was totally unfounded?"

In alluding to Lord Melville's appointment to the Admiralty, he says:—

"But then, I am told, there is the First Lord of the Admiralty,—'Do you forget the leader of the grand Catamaran project? Are you not aware of the important change in that department, and the advantage the country is likely to derive from that change?' Why, I answer, that I do not know of any peculiar qualifications the noble lord has to preside over the Admiralty; but I do know, that if I were to judge of him from the kind of capacity he evinced while Minister of War, I should entertain little hopes of him. If, however, the right honourable gentleman should say to me, 'Where else would you put

that noble lord, would you have him appointed War-Minister again?' I should say, Oh no, by no means,—I remember too well the expeditions to Toulon, to Quiberon, to Corsica, and to Holland, the responsibility for each of which the noble lord took on himself, entirely releasing from any responsibilty the Commander-in-chief and the Secretary at War. I also remember that which, although so glorious to our arms in the result, I still shall call a most unwarrantable project,—the expedition to Egypt. It may be said, that as the noble lord was so unfit for the military department, the naval was the proper place for him. Perhaps there were people who would adopt this whimsical reasoning. I remember a story told respecting Mr. Garrick, who was once applied to by an eccentric Scotchman, to introduce a production of his on the stage. This Scotchman was such a good-humoured fellow, that he was called 'Honest Johnny M'Cree.' Johnny wrote four acts of a tragedy, which he showed to Mr. Garrick, who dissuaded him from finishing it; telling him that his talent did not lie that way; so Johnny abandoned the tragedy, and set about writing a comedy. When this was finished, he showed it to Mr. Garrick, who found it to be still more exceptionable than the tragedy, and of course could not be persuaded to bring it forward on the stage. This surprised poor Johnny, and he remonstrated. 'Nay, now, David' (said Johnny), 'did you not tell me that my talents did not lie in tragedy?'—'Yes' (replied Garrick), 'but I did not tell you that they lay in comedy.'—'Then' (exclaimed Johnny), 'gin they dinna lie there, where the de'il dittha lie, mon?' Unless the noble lord at the head of the Admiralty has the same reasoning in his mind as Johnny M'Cree, he cannot possibly suppose that his incapacity for the direction of the War department necessarily qualifies him for the presidency of the Naval. Perhaps, if the noble lord be told that he has no talents for the latter, his lordship may exclaim with honest Johnny M'Cree, 'Gin they dinna lie there, where the de'il dittha lie, mon?'"

The address to the Westminster electors which he delivered, at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, in declining the offer of support which many of them still pressed upon him, contains some of those touches of personal feeling which a biographer is more particularly bound to preserve. In speaking of Mr. Fox he said:—

"It is true there have been occasions upon which I have differed with him—painful recollections of the most painful moments of my political life! Nor were there wanting those who endeavoured to represent these differences as a departure from the homage which his superior mind, though unclaimed by him, was entitled to, and from the allegiance of friendship which our hearts all swore to him. But never was the genuine and confiding texture of his soul more manifest than on such occasions: he knew that nothing on earth could detach me from him; and he resented insinuations against the sincerity and integrity of a friend, which he would not have noticed had they been pointed against himself. With such a man to have battled in the cause of genuine liberty,—with such a man to have struggled against the inroads of oppression and corruption,—with such an example before me, to have to boast that I never in my life gave one vote in Parliament that was not on the side of freedom, is the congratulation that attends the retrospect of my public life. His friendship was the pride and honour of my days. I never, for one moment, regretted to share with him the difficulties, the calumnies, and sometimes even the dangers, that attended an honourable course. And now, reviewing my past political life, were the option possible that I should re-tread the path, I solemnly and deliberately declare that I would prefer to pursue the same course; to bear up under the same pressure; to abide by the same principles; and to remain by his side an exile from power, distinction, and emolument, rather than be at this moment a splendid example of successful servility or prosperous apostasy, though clothed with power, honour, titles, gorged with sinecures, and lord of hoards obtained from the plunder of the people."

At the conclusion of his address he thus alludes, with evidently a deep feeling of discontent, to the circumstances that had obliged him to decline the honour now proposed to him:—

"Illiberal warnings have been held out, most unauthoritatively I know, that by persevering in the present contest I may risk my official situation; and if I retire, I am aware that minds, as coarse and illiberal, may assign the dread of that as my motive. To such insinuations I shall scorn to make any other reply than a reference to the whole of my past political career. I consider it as no boast to say, that any one who has struggled through such a portion of life as I have, without obtaining an office, is not likely to abandon his principles to re-

tain one when acquired. If riches do not give independence, the next best thing to being very rich is to have been used to be very poor. But independence is not allied to wealth, to birth, to rank, to power, to titles or to honour. Independence is in the mind of a man or it is nowhere. On this ground, were I to decline the contest, I should scorn the imputation that should bring the purity of my purpose into doubt. No minister can expect to find in me a servile vassal. No minister can expect from me the abandonment of any principles I have avowed, or any pledge I have given. I know not that I have hitherto shrunk in place from opinions I have maintained while in opposition. Did there exist a minister of a different cast from any I know in being, were he to attempt to exact from me a different conduct, my office should be at his service to-morrow. Such a ministry might strip me of my situation, in some respects of considerable emolument, but he could not strip me of the proud conviction that I was right; he could not strip me of my own self-esteem; he could not strip me, I think, of some portion of the confidence and good opinion of the people. But I am noticing the calumnious threat I allude to more than it deserves. There can be no peril, I venture to assert, under the present government, in the free exercise of discretion, such as belongs to the present question. I therefore disclaim the merit of putting anything to hazard. If I have missed the opportunity of obtaining all the support I might, perhaps, have had on the present occasion, from a very scrupulous delicacy, which I think became and was incumbent upon me, but which I by no means conceive to have been a fit rule for others, I cannot repent it. While the slightest aspiration of breath passed those lips, now closed for ever,—while one drop of life's blood beat in that heart, now cold for ever,—I could not, I ought not, to have acted otherwise than I did.—I now come with a very embarrassed feeling to that declaration which I yet think you must have expected from me, but which I make with reluctance, because, from the marked approbation I have experienced from you, I fear that with reluctance you will receive it,—I feel myself under the necessity of retiring from this contest."

About three weeks after ensued the dissolution of Parliament,—a measure attended with considerable unpopularity to the ministry, and originating as much in the enmity of one of its members to Lord Sidmouth, as the introduction of that noble

lord among them at all was owing to the friendship of another. In consequence of this event, Lord Percy having declined offering himself again, Mr. Sheridan became a candidate for Westminster, and after a most riotous contest with a demagogue of the moment, named Paull, was, together with Sir Samuel Hood, declared duly elected.

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SHERIDAN AND THE NEWSPAPERS.

In the debate, 30th May, 1799, about putting down Sunday newspapers, Sheridan, amongst other things, in answer to Lord Belgrave, observed that "in the law, as it at present exists, there was an exception in favour of selling mackerel on the Lord's day; but would the noble lord recollect that people might think stale news as bad as stale mackerel?"

The *Westminster Review* gives the highest and most deserved praise to Sheridan for his meritorious exertions in favour of the liberty of the press on this occasion, and although all notice of them is omitted by Mr. Moore, it is justly remarked by the reviewer that no event in Sheridan's life *does* him greater honour.

SHERIDAN'S WESTMINSTER ELECTION.

In the course of the day, Paull, his antagonist, who was the son of a tailor, envious of the brilliant uniform and more brilliant decorations of Sir S. Hood, observed, with some spleen, "that if he had chosen he might have appeared before the electors with such a coat himself." "Yes, and you might have made it too," replied Sheridan.

THE WHIG TAXES.

During the year 1806, Sheridan, having been told that his enemies took pleasure in speaking ill of him, on account of his favouring an obnoxious tax which his party were about to force through the House—"Well, let them," said Sherry; "it is but fair that they should have some *pleasure* for their money."

SHERIDAN AND HIS SON.

"THE two Sheridans," says Kelly, "were supping with me one night after the opera, at a period when Tom expected to get into Parliament—

"I think, father," said he, "that many men, who are called great patriots in the House of Commons, are great humbugs. For my own part, if I get into Parliament, I will pledge myself to no party, but write upon my forehead in legible characters, 'To be let.'"

"And under that, Tom," said his father, "write, 'Unfurnished.'"

Tom took the joke, but was even with him on another occasion.

Mr. Sheridan had a cottage about half a mile from Hounslow Heath. Tom being very short of cash, asked his father to let him have some.

"Money, I have none," was the reply.

"Be the consequence what it may, money I must have," said Tom.

"If that be the case, my dear Tom," said the affectionate parent, "you will find a case of loaded pistols upstairs, and a horse ready saddled in the stable. The night is dark, and you are within half a mile of Hounslow Heath."

"I understand what you mean," said Tom; "but I tried that last night. I unluckily stopped Peake, your treasurer, who told me that you had been beforehand with him, and had robbed him of every sixpence he had in the world."

SHERIDAN'S HABITS OF COMPOSITION.

HIS hours of composition, as long as he continued to be an author, were at night, and he required a profusion of lights around him as he wrote. Wine, too, was one of his favourite helps to inspiration. "If the thought," he would say, "is slow to come, a glass of good wine encourages it; and, when it does come, a glass of good wine rewards it."

SHERIDAN'S BOOTS.

SHERIDAN made his appearance one day in a new pair of boots. These attracting the notice of some of his friends—"Now guess," said he, "how I came by these boots?"—Many *probable* guesses then took place.—"No," said Sheridan, "you have not hit it, and never will: I bought them, and paid for them."

TOM'S ALLOWANCE.

IN a large party one evening the conversation turned upon a young man's allowance at college. Tom Sheridan lamented the ill-judged parsimony of many parents in that respect.—"I am sure, Tom," said his father, "you need not complain; I always allowed you eight hundred a year."—"Yes, father, I must confess you *allowed* it; but then you never paid it."

SHERIDAN'S NEW HOUSE.

JUST after Sheridan had taken a new house, he met Lord Guildford, to whom he said, "Well, all will go on now like clockwork."—"Ay," replied his lordship, "tick, tick."

GENERAL TARLETON.

SHERIDAN always said that the Duke of Wellington would succeed in Portugal; General Tarleton held the reverse opinion. Tarleton, who had been wrong, grew obstinate. So on the news of the retreat of the French at Torres Vedras, Sheridan, by way of taunt, said, "Well, Tarleton, are you on your high horse still?"—"Oh, higher than ever; if I was on a horse before, I am on an elephant now."—"No, no, my dear fellow; you were on an ass before, and you are on a mule now."

ROGUE OR FOOL?

ONE day Sheridan met two royal dukes in St. James's Street, and the younger flippantly remarked, "I say, Sherry, we have just been discussing whether you are a greater fool or rogue: what is your opinion, old boy?"—Sheridan bowed, smiled, and, as he took each of them by the arm, replied, "Why, faith, I believe I am between both."

TAX ON MILE-STONES.

SOME mention having been made in his presence of a tax upon mile-stones, he said, "Such a tax would be unconstitutional, as they were a race that could not meet to remonstrate."

THE OLD MAID.

AN elderly maiden lady, the inmate of a country house at which he was staying, having set her heart on being his companion in a walk, he excused himself on account of the badness of the weather. Soon afterwards, however, the lady intercepted him in an attempt to escape without her.—"So, Mr. Sheridan," she said, "it has cleared up, I see."—"Why, yes," he answered, "it has cleared up enough for *one*, but not enough for *two*."

LORD LAUDERDALE'S WIT.

LORD LAUDERDALE, happening to say that he would repeat some good thing of Sheridan's, he replied, "Pray don't, my dear Lauderdale; *a joke in your mouth is no laughing matter*."

HIS EXTRAVAGANCE.

A FRIEND remonstrating with Sheridan, when he was living in Orchard Street, on the extravagance of his establishment, and the smallness of his means to support it, he said, "My dear friend, it is my means."

SHERIDAN AND MONK LEWIS.

SHERIDAN was disputing one day with Monk Lewis, the author of "The Castle Spectre," which had filled the exhausted treasury of Drury Lane, when the latter, in support of his argument, offered to bet Mr. Sheridan all the money "The Castle Spectre" had brought that he was right. "No," answered the manager; "I cannot afford to bet so much as that; but I will tell you what I will do—I'll bet you *all it is worth*."

SHERIDAN AND LORD ERSKINE.

LORD ERSKINE one evening declared that "a wife was only a tin canister tied to one's tail." This seemed to annoy Lady

Erskine, and Sheridan seized the opportunity to dash off the following impromptu:—

Lord Erskine, at woman presuming to rail,
Calls a wife a tin canister tied to one's tail;
And fair Lady Anne, while the subject he carries on,
Seems hurt at his lordship's degrading comparison.
But wherefore degrading? Considered aright,
A canister's polished and useful and bright;
And should dirt its original purity hide,
That's the fault of the puppy to whom it is tied.

SHERIDAN'S COOLNESS.

HAYDON, the painter, says that once, when Sheridan was dining at Somerset House, and they were all in fine feather, the servant rushed in, exclaiming, "Sir, the house is on fire!"—"Bring another bottle of claret," said Sheridan; "it is not my house."

HIS WINES.

APROPOS of claret, on being asked what wine he liked best, he replied, "Other people's."

LADY DERBY'S SALARY.

WHEN Lord Derby applied in the green-room for the arrears of Lady Derby's salary, and said that he would not stir from the room till it was paid, Mr. Sheridan put his anger to flight with the following elegant compliment: "My dear lord, this is too bad; you have taken from us the brightest jewel in the world, and you now quarrel with us for a little of the dust she has left behind her."

WILBERFORCE.

ONE night, after finishing a good many bottles of wine with some boon companions, he was found by a watchman in the street, utterly helpless and almost insensible.—"Who are you?" asked the guardian of the night.—No reply.—"What's your name?"—A hiccup.—"What's your name?"—Slowly and deliberately the answer came, "Wilberforce!"

Byron, in his journal, says, "Is not that Sherry all over? and,

to my mind, excellent. Poor fellow! his very dregs are better than the first sprightly runnings of others."

WHO WILL TAKE THE CHAIR?

ONCE, being on a parliamentary committee, he arrived when all the members were assembled and seated and about to commence business. He looked round in vain for a seat, and then, with a bow and a quaint twinkle in his eyes, said, "Will any gentleman *move*, that I might take the chair?"

SHERIDAN AND GIFFORD.

HEARING that Gifford, the editor of the *Quarterly Review*, had boasted of his power of conferring and distributing literary reputation, he muttered, "Very true; and in the present instance he has done it so thoroughly that he has none left for himself."

QUITTING THE CAMP.

AFTER a very violent speech from an Opposition member, Mr. Burke started suddenly from his seat, and rushed to the Ministerial side of the House, exclaiming, with much vehemence, "I quit the camp! I quit the camp!"—"I hope," said Mr. Sheridan, "as the honourable gentleman has quitted the camp as a *deserter*, he will not return to it as a spy."

SHERIDAN AND CUMBERLAND.

CUMBERLAND'S children induced their father to take them to see "The School for Scandal." Every time the delighted youngsters laughed at what was going on on the stage, he pinched them, and said, "What are you laughing at, my dear little folks? you should not laugh, my angels; there is nothing to laugh at;" and then, in an under-tone, "Keep still, you little dunces."—Sheridan, having been told this, said, "It was very ungrateful in Cumberland to have been displeased with his poor children for laughing at *my comedy*, for I went the other night to see *his tragedy*,* and laughed at it from beginning to end."

* "The Carmelite," it is presumed, is the tragedy here referred to.

TAX ON FEMALE SERVANTS.

WHEN Pitt proposed the tax on female servants, Sheridan declared that it could be considered in no other light than a bounty to bachelors, and a penalty upon propagation."

KELLY'S BULLS.

SHERIDAN was fond of inventing bulls, and fathering them on Michael Kelly. Once, when Mrs. Crouch and Kelly were nearly killed by the falling of a tower on the stage, he told the Duchess of Devonshire that Kelly had put the following puzzling question to him: "Suppose, Mr. Sheridan, I had been killed by the fall, who would have maintained me for the rest of my life?"

SHERIDAN AND DUNDAS.

SHERIDAN, in attacking the ministers, observed, "If, as had been stated, that gentlemen would serve their country, without at the same time serving themselves, we certainly had at present a most gentlemanly administration; and one gentleman, Mr. Secretary Dundas, is three times as much a gentleman as any of them, for he has three places." Upon this attack Mr. Dundas, then very recently married, very gravely assured the House that his situation was not to be envied—that every morning when he got up, and every night when he went to rest, he had a task to perform almost too great for human powers. Sheridan instantly retorted, that he himself would be very happy to relieve Dundas from the fatigues of the Home Department!

SHERIDAN AND HIS AUTHOR.

DURING Sheridan's management, Sir Lumley Skeffington had produced a play which he offered to Covent Garden, saying that it would make Drury Lane a *splendid desert.* His play failed; but, soon after, he prevailed on a friend to present a new one to Sheridan, then the manager of Old Drury,—"No, no!" exclaimed the latter; I can't agree to connive at putting his former threat into effect."

THE MALT-TAX.

MR. WHITBREAD was talking loudly one evening, at Brookes's,

against the Ministry for laying what he termed the *war-tax* upon malt. Most of the company agreed with him, but Sheridan could not resist a hit at the *brewer* himself. On the back of a letter he wrote, in pencil, the following lines, and handed them across the table to Mr. Whitbread :—

They've raised the price of table drink:
What is the reason, do you think?
The tax on *malt's* the cause, I hear;
But what has *malt* to do with *beer?*

JUDAS ISCARIOT.

A MISERLY parson, who seldom gave his mite to charities, was prevailed upon to attend a sermon in Westminster. After the sermon the plate was handed round the vestry. Fox and Sheridan were present.—"The doctor has absolutely given his pound," said FOX.—"Then," said Sheridan, "he must absolutely think he is going to die."—"Pooh!" replied Fox; "even Judas threw away twice the money."—"Yes," said Sheridan, "but how long was it before he was hanged?"

SHERIDAN AND THE LAWYER.

ONCE, when a lawyer, of the name of Clifford, had made strong comments upon Sheridan's political conduct, he replied, "As to the lawyer who has honoured me with so much abuse, I do not know how to answer him, as I am no proficient in the language or manners of St. Giles's. But one thing I can say of him, and it is in his favour; I hardly expect you will believe me—the thing is incredible, but I pledge my word to the fact, that once, if not twice, but once most assuredly, I did meet him in the company of gentlemen."

THE UNBROKEN PLATES.

SHERIDAN was dining at Mr. Peter Moore's, with his son Tom, who was in a nervous, debilitated state. One of the servants, in passing quickly between the guests and the fire-place, struck down the plate-warmer. This made a great rattle, and caused Tom Sheridan to start and tremble. Peter Moore, provoked

at this, rebuked the servant, and said, "I suppose you have bròken all the plates?"—"No, sir," said the servant; "not one."—"No?" exclaimed Sheridan; "then, damn it! you have made all that noise for nothing."

LIFE IN DEATH.

He preserved his pleasantry and keen perception of the ridiculous almost as long as his life lasted. A solicitor, Mr. R. W., who had been much favoured in wills, waited on Sheridan: after he left the room, another friend came in, to whom Sheridan said, "My friends have been very kind in calling upon me, and offering their services in their respective ways; Dick W. has just been here with his *will-making face.*"

OPERATIONS.

During his last illness, the medical attendants apprehending that they would be obliged to perform an operation on him, asked him "if he had ever undergone one." "Never," replied Sheridan, "except when sitting for my picture, or having my hair cut."

"THE GLORIOUS FIRST OF JUNE."

When this piece was produced Kelly entreated Sheridan to make his part as short as possible. He had a song to sing which was to be introduced by some lines. Kelly received his part on the night of performance, the stage directions were that he was to gaze earnestly for some moments at the cottage in the distance, and to proceed thus: "Here stands my Louisa's cottage, and she must be either in it or out of it." It is needless to say that this line brought down a yell of laughter; and that Sheridan afterwards complimented Kelly upon the marvellous manner in which he had played the part at so short a notice.

SHERIDAN'S OPINION OF THE PRESS.

He dreaded the newspapers and always courted their favour. He used often to say, "Let me but have the periodical press on my side, and there should be nothing in this country which I would not accomplish."

MRS. SIDDONS.

MR. ROGERS once said to him, "Your admiration of Mrs. Siddons is so high, that I wonder you never made open love to her." "To her!" said Sheridan, "to that magnificent and appalling creature; I should as soon think of making love to the Archbishop of Canterbury."

SHERIDAN AND GEORGE ROSE.

SHERIDAN, lounging towards Whitehall, met George Rose coming out of St. Margaret's. "Any mischief on foot, George, that you have been at church?" "No, I have been getting my son christened; I have called him William Pitt." "William Pitt!

"'A rose
By any other name would smell as sweet,'"

said Sheridan.

SHERIDAN'S HOAX ON THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

LORD BELGRAVE (afterwards the Earl of Grosvenor) having clenched a speech in the House with a long Greek quotation, Sheridan in reply admitted the force of the quotation so far as it went, "but," said he, "had the noble lord proceeded a little further and completed the passage he would have seen that it applied the other way." Sheridan then spouted something, *ore rotundo*, which had all the *ais*, *ois*, *ous*, *kon*, and *kos*, that give the wonted assurance of a Greek quotation; upon which Lord Belgrave very promptly and handsomely complimented the honourable member on his readiness of recollection, and frankly admitted that the continuation of the passage had the tendency ascribed to it by Mr. Sheridan, and that he had overlooked it when he gave the quotation. On the breaking up of the House FOX, who piqued himself on having some Greek, went up to Sheridan and asked him, "Sheridan, how came you so ready with that passage? It is certainly as you say, but I was not aware of it before you quoted it." It is unnecessary to say that there is no Greek at all in Sheridan's impromptu.

SHERIDAN AND HIS WILL.

SHERIDAN wished his son to marry a young lady of large fortune who was enamoured of him, but knew that Miss Callander had won his heart. One day, when talking on the subject, Sheridan grew warm, and expatiating on the folly of his son, exclaimed, "Tom, if you marry Caroline Callander I'll cut you off with a shilling!" Tom could not resist the opportunity of replying, and looking archly at his father, said: "Then, sir, you must borrow it." Sheridan was tickled at the wit and dropped the subject. The future proved how correctly Tom had judged.

LORD THURLOW.

SHERIDAN was dining with the black-browed Chancellor, when he produced some admirable Constantia, which had been sent him from the Cape of Good Hope; the wine tickled the palate of the connoisseur, who saw the bottle emptied with uncommon regret, and set his wits to work to get another. The old Chancellor was not to be easily induced to produce his curious Cape in such profusion, and foiled all Sheridan's attempts to get another glass. Sheridan being piqued, and seeing the inutility of persecuting the immovable pillar of the law, turned towards a gentleman sitting farther down, and said, "Sir, pass me up that decanter, for I must return to Madeira since I cannot double the Cape."

AMBITION AND AVARICE.

BEING asked, "Why do we honour ambition and despise avarice, while they are both but the desire of possessing?" "Because," said Sheridan, "the one is natural, the other artificial, the one the sign of mental health, the other of mental decay; the one appetite, the other disease."

ANOTHER BULL.

ANOTHER bull that Sheridan invented for Michael Kelly was as follows:—Michael was looking through a hole in the curtain when the theatre was crowded to excess. John Kemble asked

him how the house looked. Sheridan said that Kelly replied, "By J—s, you can't stick a pin's head in any part of it, it is literally chuck full; but how much fuller it will be to-morrow night when the king comes!"

MR. PITT'S SINKING FUND.

THOUGH, from the prosperous state of the revenue at the time of the institution of this fund, the absurdity was not yet committed of borrowing money to maintain it, we may perceive by the following acute pleasantry of Mr. Sheridan (who denied the existence of the alleged surplus of income), that he already had a keen insight into the fallacy of the plan of redemption afterwards followed:—"At present," he said, "it was clear there was no surplus, and the only means which suggested themselves to him were a loan of a million for the special purpose, for the right hon. gentleman might say, with the person in the comedy, '*If you won't lend me the money how can I pay you?*"

SHERIDAN AND PALMER.

THE return of Palmer, the original Joseph Surface, to Drury Lane, was a subject of infinite importance, in a theatrical point of view, both to himself and Sheridan. The meeting between these men of *address* was, therefore, expected to produce something remarkable. Palmer made quite a scene of it. After his profound bow, he approached the author of the "School for Scandal," with an air of penitent humility, his head declined, the whites of his eyes turned upwards, his hands clasped together, and his whole air exactly that of Joseph Surface before Sir Peter Teazle. He began thus:—My dear Mr. Sheridan, if you could but know what I feel at this moment HERE (*laying his hand upon his heart*). Sheridan, with inimitable readiness stopped him.

"Why, Jack! you forget *I wrote it.*"

Palmer in telling this story himself, added that the manager's wit cost him something; "for," said he, "I made him add three pounds per week to the salary I had before my desertion."

HIS ANSWER TO A CREDITOR.

He jocularly remarked one day to a creditor who demanded instant payment of a long standing debt with interest: "My dear sir, you know it is not my *interest* to pay the *principal;* nor is it my *principle* to pay the *interest.*

SHERIDAN AND THE PRINCE.

The Prince of Wales, one cold day, went into Brookes's, and, complaining of the severity of the weather, called for a glass of brandy and water, which he emptied at a draught, he then immediately ordered another; after drinking the second and third glass he exclaimed, "Now I am comfortable; waiter, bring me a rump steak." Sheridan, who was present, wrote the following impromptu, and handed them to his royal highness:—

The prince came in, and said 'twas cold,
Then put to his head the rummer;
Till *swallow* after *swallow* came,
When he pronounced it summer.

KELLY'S IRISH ACCENT.

Kelly, having to perform an Irish character, got Johnson to coach him up in the brogue, but with so little success that Sheridan said, on entering the green-room at the conclusion of the piece, "Bravo, Kelly! I never heard you speak such good English in all my life."

DR. DARWIN.

When the prince was expatiating on the beauty of Dr. Darwin's theory, that the reason why the bosom of a beautiful woman has such a fascinating effect on man is, because he derived from that source the first pleasurable sensations of his infancy; Sheridan happily ridiculed the idea. "Such children, then," said he, "as are brought up by hand, must needs be indebted for similar sensations to a very different object; yet, I believe, no man has ever felt any intense emotions of amatory delight at beholding a pap-spoon."

SHERIDAN'S FRIENDSHIP FOR FOX.

Of their friendship Lord John Townshend writes:—

"I made the first dinner party at which they met; having told Fox that all the notions he might have conceived of Sheridan's talents and genius from the comedy of 'The Rivals,' &c., would fall infinitely short of the admiration of his astonishing powers, which I was sure he would entertain at the first interview.

"The first interview between them (there were very few present, only Tickell and myself, and one or two more), I shall never forget. Fox told me, breaking up from dinner, that he had always thought that Hare, after my uncle, Charles Townshend, the wittiest man he had ever met with, but that Sheridan surpassed them both infinitely; and Sheridan told me next day, that he was quite lost in admiration of Fox, and it was a puzzle to him to say which he admired most—his commanding superiority of talent and universal knowledge; or his playful fancy, artless manners, and benevolence of heart, which showed itself in every word he uttered."

PRACTICAL JOKES.

On one occasion, Sheridan having covered the floor of a dark passage, leading from the drawing-room, with all the plates and dishes of the house, ranged closely together, provoked his unconscious play-fellow, Tickell, to pursue him into the midst of them. Having left a path for his own escape, he passed through easily, but Tickell falling at full length into the ambuscade, was very much cut in several places. The next day, Lord John Townshend, on paying a visit to the bed-side of Tickell, found him covered over with patches, and indignantly vowing vengeance against Sheridan for this unjustifiable trick. In the midst of his anger, however, he could not help exclaiming, with the true feeling of an amateur of this sort of mischief, "But how amazingly well done it was!"

SHERIDAN AND RICHARDSON.

Richardson was remarkable for his love of disputation; and Tickell, when hard pressed by him in argument, used often, as a last resource, to assume the voice and manner of Mr. Fox, which he had the power of mimicking so exactly, that Richard-

son confessed he sometimes stood awed and silenced by the resemblance.

This disputatious humour of Richardson was once turned to account by Sheridan in a very characteristic manner. Having had a hackney-coach in employ for five or six hours, and not being provided with the means of paying it, he happened to espy Richardson in the street, and proposed to take him in the coach some part of his way. The offer being accepted, Sheridan lost no time in starting a subject of conversation, on which he knew his companion was sure to become argumentative and animated. Having, by well-managed contradiction, brought him to the proper pitch of excitement, he affected to grow impatient and angry himself, and saying that "he could not think of staying in the same coach with a person that would use such language," pulled the check-string, and desired the coachman to let him out. Richardson, wholly occupied with the argument, and regarding the retreat of his opponent as an acknowledgment of defeat, still pressed his point, and even hollowed "more last words" through the coach window after Sheridan, who, walking quietly home, left the poor disputant responsible for the heavy fare of the coach.

HIS IMPROVIDENCE.

His improvidence in everything connected with money was most remarkable. He would frequently be obliged to stop on his journeys, for want of the means of getting on, and to remain living expensively at an inn, till a remittance could reach him. His letters to the treasurer of the theatre on these occasions were generally headed with the words, "Money-bound." A friend of his said, that one morning, while waiting for him in his study, he cast his eyes over the heap of unopened letters that lay upon the table, and, seeing one or two with coronets on the seals, said to Mr. Westley, the treasurer, who was present, "I see we are all treated alike." Mr. Westley then informed him that he had once found, on looking over his table, a letter which he had himself sent, a few weeks before, to Mr. Sheridan, enclosing a ten-pound note, to release him from some

inn, but which Sheridan, having raised the supplies in some other way, had never thought of opening. The prudent treasurer took away the letter, and reserved the enclosure for some future exigence.

Among instances of his inattention to letters, the following is mentioned. Going one day to the banking-house, where he was accustomed to be paid his salary, as Receiver of Cornwall, and where they sometimes accommodated him with small sums before the regular time of payment, he asked, with all due humility, whether they could oblige him with the loan of twenty pounds. "Certainly, sir," said the clerk,—"would you like any more—fifty, or a hundred?" Sheridan, all smiles and gratitude, answered that a hundred pounds would be of the greatest convenience to him. "Perhaps you would like to take two hundred, or three?" said the clerk. At every increase of the sum, the surprise of the borrower increased. "Have not you then received our letter?" said the clerk;—on which it turned out that, in consequence of the falling in of some fine, a sum of twelve hundred pounds had been lately placed to the credit of the Receiver-General, and that, from not having opened the letter written to apprise him, he had been left in ignorance of his good luck.

POLITICAL PASQUINADES.

THE following string of pasquinades, written at different dates, though principally by Sheridan, owes some of its stanzas to Tickell, and a few others to Lord John Townshend. Time having removed their venom, and with it, in a great degree, their wit, they are now, like dried snakes, mere harmless objects of curiosity.

Johnny W—ilks, Johnny W—ilks*,
Thou greatest of bilks,

* In Sheridan's copy of the stanzas written by him in this metre at the time of the Union (beginning "Zooks, Harry! zooks, Harry!") he entitled them "An admirable new Ballad, which goes excellently well to the tune of

"Mrs. Arne, Mrs. Arne,
It gives me concarn," &c.

How chang'd are the notes you now sing!
Your fam'd Forty-five
Is Prerogative,
And your blasphemy, "God save the King,"
Johnny W—ilks,
And your blasphemy, "God save the King."

Jack Ch—ch—ll, Jack Ch—ch—ll,
The town sure you search ill,
Your mob has disgraced all your brags;
When next you draw out
Your hospital rout,
Do, prithee, afford them clean rags,
Jack Ch—ch—ll,
Do, prithee, afford them clean rags.

Captain K—th, Captain K—th,
Keep your tongue 'twixt your teeth,
Lest bed-chamber tricks you betray;
And, if teeth you want more,
Why, my bold Commodore,—
You may borrow of Lord G—ll—y,
Captain K—th,
You may borrow of Lord G—ll—y.

* Joe M—wb—y, Joe M—wb—y,
Your throat sure must raw be,
In striving to make yourself heard;
But it pleased not the pigs,
Nor the Westminster whigs,
That your knighthood should utter one word,
Joe M—wb—y,
That your knighthood should utter one word.

M—ntm—res, M—ntm—res,
Whom nobody for is,
And *for* whom we none of us care;
From Dublin you came—
It had been much the same
If your lordship had stayed where you were,
M—ntm—res,
If your lordship had stayed where you were.

* This stanza and the next were by Lord John Townshend.

Lord O—gl—y, Lord O—gl—y,
You spoke mighty strongly—
Who you *are*, tho', all people admire!
But I'll let you depart,
For I believe in my heart,
You had rather they did not inquire,
Lord O—gl—y,
You had rather they did not inquire.

Gl—nb—e, Gl—nb—e,
What's good for the scurvy?
For ne'er be your old trade forgot—
In your arms rather quarter
A pestle and mortar,
And your crest be a spruce gallipot,
Gl—nb—e,
And your crest be a spruce gallipot.

Gl—nb—e, Gl—nb—e,
The world's topsy-turvy,
Of this truth you're the fittest attester;
For, who can deny
That the low become high,
When the king makes a lord of Silvester,
Gl—nb—e,
When the king makes a lord of Silvester?

Mr. P—l, Mr. P—l,
In return for your zeal,
I am told they have dubb'd you Sir Bol
Having got wealth enough
By coarse Manchester stuff,
For honours you'll now drive a job,
Mr. P—l,
For honours you'll now drive a job.

Oh poor B—ks, oh poor B—ks,
Still condemn'd to the ranks,
Not e'en yet from a private promoted;
Pitt ne'er will relent,
Though he knows you repent
Having once or twice honestly voted,
Poor B—ks,
Having once or twice honestly voted.

Dull H—l—y, dull H—l—y,
Your auditors feel ye
A speaker of very great weight,
And they wish you were dumb,
When, with ponderous hum,
You lengthen the drowsy debate,
Dull H—l—y,
You lengthen the drowsy debate.

There are about as many more of these stanzas, written, at different intervals, according as new victims, with good names for rhyming, presented themselves,—the metre being a most tempting medium for such lampoons. There is, indeed, appended to one of Sheridan's copies of them, a long list (like a Table of Proscription), containing about fifteen other names marked out for the same fate; and it will be seen by the following specimen that some of them had a very narrow escape:—

Will C—rt—s . . . . .
V—ns—t—t, V—ns—t—t,—for little thou fit art.
Will D—nd—s, Will D—nd—s,—were you only an ass.
L—ghb—h,—thorough.
Sam H—rsl—y, Sam H—rsl—y, . . . coarsely.
P—ttym—n, P—ttym—n,—speak truth if you can.

SHERIDAN'S SERMON.

The Rev. Mr. O'B——(afterwards Bishop of ——) having arrived to dinner at Sheridan's country-house near Osterley, where, as usual, a gay party was collected (consisting of General Burgoyne, Mrs. Crewe, Tickell, &c.), it was proposed that on the next day (Sunday) the rev. gentleman should, on gaining the consent of the resident clergyman, give a specimen of his talents as a preacher in the village church. On his objecting that he was not provided with a sermon, his host offered to write one for him, if he would consent to preach it; and, the offer being accepted, Sheridan left the company early, and did not return for the remainder of the evening. The following morning Mr. O'B—— found the manuscript by his bedside, tied together neatly (as he described it) with riband;—the subject of the discourse being the "Abuse of Riches." Having read it over and corrected some theological errors (such as "it

is easier for a camel, *as Moses says,*" &c.), he delivered the sermon in his most impressive style, much to the delight of his own party, and to the satisfaction, as he unsuspectingly flattered himself, of all the rest of the congregation, among whom was Mr. Sheridan's wealthy neighbour, Mr. C——.

Some months afterwards, however, Mr. O'B—— perceived that the family of Mr. C——, with whom he had previously been intimate, treated him with marked coldness; and, on his expressing some innocent wonder at the circumstance, was at length informed, to his dismay, by General Burgoyne, that the sermon which Sheridan had written for him was, throughout, a personal attack upon Mr. C——, who had at that time rendered himself very unpopular in the neighbourhood by some harsh conduct to the poor, and to whom every one in the church, except the unconscious preacher, applied almost every sentence of the sermon.

ELECTION EXPENSES IN 1784.

R. B. Sheridan, Esq. Expenses at the Borough of Stafford for Election, Anno 1784.

	£	s.	d.
248 Burgesses, paid £5 5 0 each	1,302	0	0
Yearly Expenses since.			
House-rent and taxes ... £23 6 6			
Servant at 6s. per week, board wages 15 12 0			
Ditto, yearly wages 8 8 0			
Coals, &c. 10 0 0			
——— 57 6 6			
Ale tickets 40 0 0			
Half the members' plate ...25 0 0			
Swearing young burgesses ...10 0 0			
Subscription to the infirmary 5 5 0			
Ditto clergymen's widows ... 2 2 0			
Ringers... ... ... 4 4 0			
—— —— 86 11 0			
One year 143 17 6			
Multiplied by years ... 6			
———	863	5	0
Total expense of six years' parliament, exclusive of expense incurred during the time of election, and his own annual expenses	2,165	5	0

MR. SHERIDAN AND THE SCOTCH BOROUGHS.

He had been, singularly enough, selected, in the year 1787, by the burgesses of Scotland, in preference to so many others possessing more personal knowledge of that country, to present to the House the Petition of the Convention. Delegates, for a Reform of the internal government of the Royal Boroughs. How fully satisfied they were with his exertions in their cause may be judged by the following extract from the Minutes of Convention, dated 11th August, 1791 :—

"Mr. Mills, of Perth, after a suitable introductory speech, moved a vote of thanks to Mr. Sheridan, in the following words :—

"The Delegates of the Burgesses of Scotland, associated for the purposes of Reform, taking into their most serious consideration the important services rendered to their cause by the manly and prudent exertions of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, Esq., the genuine and fixed attachment to it which the whole tenor of his conduct has evinced, and the admirable moderation he has all along displayed,

"Resolved unanimously, That the most sincere thanks of this meeting be given to the said Richard Brinsley Sheridan, Esq., for his steady, honourable, and judicious conduct in bringing the question of the violated rights of the Scottish Baroughs to its present important and favourable crisis ; and the Burgesses with firm confidence hope that, from his attachment to the cause, which he has shown to be deeply rooted in principle, he will persevere to exert his distinguished abilities, till the objects of it are obtained, with that inflexible firmness, and constitutional moderation, which have appeared so conspicuous and exemplary throughout the whole of his conduct, as to be highly deserving of the imitation of all good citizens.

"John Ewen, Secretary."

HIS BETS.

"*25th May*, 1793.—Mr. Sheridan bets Gen. Fitzpatrick one hundred guineas to fifty guineas, that within two years from this date some measure is adopted in Parliament which shall be (*bonâ fide*) considered as the adoption of a Parliamentary Reform."

"*29th January*, 1793.—Mr. S. bets Mr. Boothby Clopton five hundred guineas that there is a Reform in the Representation of the people of England within three years from the date hereof."

"*29th January*, 1793.—Mr. S. bets Mr. Hardy five hundred to fifty guineas, that Mr. W. Windham does not represent Norwich at the next general election."

"*29th January*, 1793.—Mr. S. bets Gen. Fitzpatrick fifty guineas, that a corps of British troops are sent to Holland within two months of the date hereof."

"*18th March*, 1793.—Mr. S. bets Lord Titchfield two hundred guineas, that the D. of Portland is at the head of an Administration on or before the 18th of March, 1796 : Mr. Fox to decide whether any place the Duke may then fill shall *bonâ fide* come within the meaning of this bet."

"*25th March*, 1793.—Mr. S. bets Mr. Hardy one hundred guineas, that the three per cent. consols are as high this day twelvemonth as at the date hereof."

"Mr. S. bets Gen. Tarleton one hundred guineas to fifty guineas, that Mr. Pitt is First Lord of the Treasury on the 28th of May, 1795.—Mr. S. bets Mr. St. A. St. John fifteen guineas to five guineas, ditto.—Mr. S. bets Lord Sefton one hundred and forty guineas to forty guineas, ditto."

"*19th March*, 1793.—Lord Titchfield and Lord W. Russell bet Mr. S. three hundred guineas to two hundred guineas, that Mr. Pitt is First Lord of the Treasury on the 19th of March, 1795."

"*18th March*, 1793.—Lord Titchfield bets Mr. S. twenty-five guineas to fifty guineas, that Mr. W. Windham represents Norwich at the next general election."

SHERIDAN'S BAG.

In the May of 1794 Mr. Sheridan was called upon for his reply on the Begum charge. It was usual, on these occasions, for the manager who spoke to be assisted by one of his brother managers, whose task it was to carry the bag that contained his papers, and to read out whatever minutes might be referred to in the course of the argument. Mr. Michael Angelo Taylor was the person who undertook this office for Sheridan ; but, on the morning of the speech, upon his asking for the bag that he was to carry, he was told by Sheridan that there was none—neither bag nor papers. They must manage, he said, as well as

they could without them;—and when the papers were called for, his friend must only put the best countenance he could upon it. As for himself, "he would abuse Ned Law—ridicule Plumer's long orations—make the court laugh—please the women, and, in short, with Taylor's aid, would get triumphantly through his task." His opening of the case was listened to with the profoundest attention; but when he came to contrast the evidence of the Commons with that adduced by Hastings, it was not long before the chancellor interrupted him, with a request that the printed minutes to which he referred should be read. Sheridan answered that his friend Mr. Taylor would read them; and Mr. Taylor affected to send for the bag, while the orator begged leave, in the meantime, to proceed. Again, however, his statements rendered a reference to the minutes necessary, and again he was interrupted by the chancellor, while an outcry after Mr. Sheridan's bag was raised in all directions. At first the blame was laid on the solicitor's clerk;—then a messenger was dispatched to Mr. Sheridan's house. In the meantime the orator was proceeding brilliantly and successfully in his argument, and, on some further interruption and expostulation from the chancellor, raised his voice, and said, in a dignified tone, "On the part of the Commons, and as manager of this impeachment, I shall conduct my case as I think proper. I mean to be correct; and your lordships, having the printed minutes before you, will afterwards see whether I am right or wrong."

During the bustle produced by the inquiries after the bag, Mr. Fox, alarmed at the inconvenience which he feared the want of it might occasion to Sheridan, ran up from the manager's room, and demanded eagerly the cause of this mistake from Mr. Taylor; who, hiding his mouth with his hand, whispered him (in a tone full of humour), "The man has no bag!"

The whole of this characteristic contrivance was evidently intended by Sheridan to raise that sort of surprise at the readiness of his resources, which it was the favourite triumph of his

vanity to create. Mr. Moore says, "I have it on the authority of Mr. William Smythe, that, previously to the delivery of this speech, he passed two or three days alone at Wanstead, so occupied from morning till night in writing and reading of papers, as to complain in the evenings that he 'had motes before his eyes.' This mixture of real labour with apparent carelessness was, indeed, one of the most curious features of his life and character."

HIS LETTER ON BEING APPOINTED RECEIVER OF THE DUCHY OF CORNWALL.

EARLY in the year 1804, on the death of Lord Elliot, the office of Receiver of the Duchy of Cornwall, which had been held by that nobleman, was bestowed by the Prince of Wales upon Mr. Sheridan, "as a trifling proof of that sincere friendship his Royal Highness had always professed and felt for him through a long series of years." His Royal Highness also added, in the same communication, the very cordial words, "I wish to God it was better worth your acceptance."

The following letter from Sheridan to Mr. Addington, communicating the intelligence of this appointment, shows pretty plainly the terms on which he not only now stood, but was well inclined to continue, with that minister:—

George Street, Tuesday evening.

DEAR SIR,—Convinced as I am of the sincerity of your good will towards me, I do not regard it as an impertinent intrusion to inform you that the Prince has, in the most gracious manner, and wholly unsolicited, been pleased to appoint me to the late Lord Elliot's situation in the Duchy of Cornwall. I feel a desire to communicate this to you myself, because I feel a confidence that you will be glad of it. It has been my pride and pleasure to have exerted my humble efforts to serve the Prince without ever accepting the slightest obligation from him; but, in the present case, and under the present circumstances, I think it would have been really false pride and apparently mischievous affectation to have declined this mark of his Royal Highness's confidence and favour. I will not disguise that, at this peculiar crisis, I am greatly gratified at this event. Had it been the result of a mean and subservient devotion to the

Prince's every wish and object, I could neither have respected the gift, the giver, or myself; but when I consider how recently it was my misfortune to find myself compelled by a sense of duty, stronger than my attachment to him, wholly to risk the situation I held in his confidence and favour, and that upon a subject* on which his feelings were so eager and irritable, I cannot but regard the increased attention, with which he has since honoured me, as a most gratifying demonstration that he has clearness of judgment and firmness of spirit to distinguish the real friends to his true glory and interests from the mean and mercenary sycophants, who fear and abhor that such friends should be near him. It is satisfactory to me, also, that this appointment also gives me the title and opportunity of seeing the Prince, on trying occasions, openly and in the face of day, and puts aside the mask of mystery and concealment. I trust I need not add, that whatever small portion of fair influence I may at any time possess with the prince, it shall be uniformly exerted to promote those feelings of duty and affection towards their Majesties, which, though seemingly interrupted by adverse circumstances, I am sure are in his heart warm and unalterable —and, as far as I may presume, that general concord throughout his illustrious family, which must be looked to by every honest subject, as an essential part of the public strength at this momentous period. I have the honour to be, with great respect and esteem,

Your obedient servant,
R. B. SHERIDAN.

Right Hon. Henry Addington.

SHERIDAN'S PERSONAL APPEARANCE.

WHEN young, he was generally accounted handsome; but in later years his eyes were the only testimonials of beauty that remained to him. It was, indeed, in the upper part of his face that the spirit of the man chiefly reigned, the dominion of the world and the senses being rather strongly marked out in the lower. In his person he was about the middle size, and his general make was robust and well proportioned. It is remarkable that his arms, though of powerful strength, were thin, and appeared by no means muscular. His hands were small and

* The offer made by the Prince of his personal services in 1803,—on which occasion Sheridan coincided with the views of Mr. Addington somewhat more than was agreeable to his Royal Highness.

delicate; and the following couplet, written on a cast from one of them, very livelily enumerates both its physical and moral qualities:—

Good at a Fight, but better at a Play,
Godlike in Giving, but—the Devil to Pay!

THE PRINCE ON MOORE'S "LIFE OF SHERIDAN."

FROM a work called "Sheridan and his Times" the following is extracted:—

"Watson, the Prince Regent's purse-bearer, having approached his royal master when the latter was busily engaged in scanning the pages of Moore's 'Life of Sheridan,' the Prince, rising from his seat, said,—

"'Let your business wait a little until you have answered my question. Have you seen Moore lately, or does he keep himself hidden from public observation?'

"'I have not seen Mr. Moore lately, your Royal Highness, but I understand he is staying at Lansdowne House,' was Watson's reply.

"On which the Prince rejoined, 'Look him out, sir, if you have any charity for the man. Bid him abscond, if he would avoid the penalty of the law, and escape indictment under Lord Ellenborough's Act rendering cutting and maiming a capital felony.'

"With a look of astonishment, Watson exclaimed, 'Impossible, your Royal Highness!'

"'Impossible, sir! Why, I have before me,' retorted the Prince, 'the most conclusive evidence of his having *barbarously attempted* the life of *Sheridan*.'"

LORD BYRON AND SHERIDAN.

MONODY ON THE DEATH OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE R. B. SHERIDAN.

By Lord Byron. Spoken by Mr. Rae, at Drury Lane, on the 7th September, 1816.

WHEN the last sunshine of expiring day
In summer's twilight weeps itself away,
Who hath not felt the softness of the hour
Sink on the heart, as dew along the flower,

With a pure feeling which absorbs and awes,
While nature makes that melancholy pause
Her breathing moment on the bridge where Time
Of light and darkness forms an arch sublime?
Who hath not shared that calm so still and deep,
The voiceless thought which could not speak but weep,—
A holy concord, and a bright regret,
A glorious sympathy with suns that set?
'Tis not harsh sorrow, but a tender woe,
Nameless, but dear to gentle hearts below;
Felt without bitterness, but full and clear;
A sweet dejection—a transparent tear
Unmix'd with worldly grief or selfish stain,
Shed without shame, and secret without pain.
Even as the tenderness that hour instils
When summer's day declines along the hills,
So feels the fulness of our heart and eyes
When all of genius which can perish dies.

A mighty spirit is eclipsed—a power
Hath pass'd from day to darkness, to whose hour
Of light no likeness is bequeath'd—no name,
Focus at once of all the rays of fame!
The flash of wit, the bright intelligence,
The beam of song, the blaze of eloquence,
Set with their sun—but still have left behind
The enduring produce of immortal mind;
Fruits of a genial morn and glorious noon,
A deathless part of him who died too soon.
But small that portion of the wondrous whole,
These sparkling segments of that circling soul,
Which all embraced and lightened over all,
To cheer, to pierce, to please, or to appal;
From the charm'd council to the festive board,
Of human feelings the unbounded lord,
In whose acclaim the loftiest voices vied—
The praised, the proud, who made his praise their pride.
When the loud cry of trampled Hindostan
Arose to Heaven in her appeal from man,
His was the thunder, his the avenging rod—
The wrath, the delegated voice of God!
Which shook the nations through his lips, and blazed
Till vanquished senates trembled as they praised.

And here, oh, here! where yet, all young and warm,
The gay creations of his spirit charm,—
The matchless dialogue, the deathless wit
Which knew not what it was to intermit,
The glowing portraits fresh from life that bring
Home to our hearts the truth from which they spring,
These wondrous beings of his fancy wrought
To fulness by the fiat of his thought,
Here, in their first abode, you still may meet,
Bright with the hues of his Promethean heat,
A halo of the light of other days
Which still the splendour of its orb betrays.

But should there be to whom the fatal blight
Of failing wisdom yields a base delight—
Men who exult when minds of heavenly tone
Jar in the music which was born their own—
Still let them pause—ah! little do they know
That what to them seemed vice might be but woe.

Hard is his fate on whom the public gaze
Is fixed for ever, to detract or praise;
Repose denies her requiem to his name,
And Folly loves the martyrdom of Fame.
The secret enemy, whose sleepless eye
Stands sentinel, accuser, judge, and spy;
The foe, the fool, the jealous, and the vain;
The envious, who but breathe in others' pain;
Behold the host! delighting to deprave,
Who track the steps of Glory to the grave,
Watch every fault that daring genius owes
Half to the ardour which its birth bestows,
Distort the truth, accumulate the lie,
And pile the pyramid of calumny!
These are his portion; but if, joined to these,
Gaunt Poverty should league with deep Disease;
If the high spirit must forget to soar,
And stoop to strive with Misery at the door,
To soothe Indignity, and face to face
Meet sordid Rage, and wrestle with Disgrace;
To find in Hope but the renewed caress,
The serpent-fold of further faithlessness—
If such may be the ills which men assail,
What marvel if at last the mightiest fail?

Breasts to whom all the strength of feeling given,
Bear hearts electric, charged with fire from heaven;
Black with the rude collision, inly torn,
By clouds surrounded, and on whirlwinds borne,
Driven o'er the louring atmosphere that nurst
Thoughts which have turned to thunder, scorch and burst.

But far from us, and from our mimic scene,
Such things should be, if such have ever been:
Ours be the gentler wish, the kinder task,
To give the tribute Glory need not ask;
To mourn the vanished beam, and add our mite
Of praise in payment of a long delight.

Ye orators, whom yet our councils yield,
Mourn for the veteran hero of your field!
The worthy rival of the wondrous Three,*
Whose words were sparks of immortality.
Ye bards, to whom the drama's muse is dear,
He was your master—emulate him *here!*
Ye men of wit and social eloquence,
He was your brother—bear his ashes hence!
While powers of mind almost of boundless range,
Complete in kind as various in their change;
While eloquence, wit, poesy, and mirth,
That humbler harmonist of care on earth,
Survive within our souls; while lives our sense
Of pride in merit's proud pre-eminence,
Long shall we seek his likeness, long in vain,
And turn to all of him which may remain,
Sighing that Nature formed but one such man,
And broke the die, in moulding Sheridan!

EXTRACT FROM LORD BYRON'S LETTERS.

"WHATEVER Sheridan has done or chosen to do has been, *par excellence*, always the best of its kind. He has written the best comedy, 'The School for Scandal;' the best opera, 'The Duenna' (in my mind far before that St. Giles's lampoon, 'The Beggars' Opera'); the best farce, 'The Critic'—it is only too good for a farce; and the best address, the 'Monologue on

* Fox, Pitt, Burke.

Garrick;' and, to crown all, delivered the very best oration, the famous Begum speech, ever conceived or heard in this country.

"In society I have met Sheridan frequently. He had a sort of liking for me, and never attacked me, at least to my face, and he did everybody else—high names, and wits, and orators, some of them poets also. I have seen him cut up Whitbread, quiz Madame de Stael, annihilate Colman, and do little less by some others (whose names, as friends, I set not down) of good fame and ability.

"The last time I met him was, I think, at Sir Gilbert Heathcote's, where he was as quick as ever; no, it was not the last time—the last time was at Douglas Kinnaird's.

"I have met him in all places and parties—at Whitehall with the Melbournes, at the Marquis of Tavistock's, at Robins, the auctioneer's, at Sir Humphry Davy's, at Sam Rogers'; in short, in most kinds of company, and always found him very convivial and delightful.

"I have seen Sheridan weep two or three times. It may be he was maudlin, but this only renders it more impressive; for who would see

> "'From Marlborough's eyes the tears of dotage flow,
> And Swift expire a driveller and a show.'

Once I saw him cry at Robins, the auctioneer's, after a splendid dinner, full of great names and high spirits; I had the honour of sitting next to Sheridan. The occasion of his tears was some observation or other upon the subject of the sturdiness of the Whigs in resisting office and keeping to their principles. Sheridan turned round: 'Sir, it is easy for my Lord G., or Earl G., or Marquis of B., or Lord H., with thousands upon thousands a year, some of it either *presently* derived or inherited, in sinecure or acquisitions from the public money, to boast of their patriotism and keep aloof from temptation, but they do not know from what temptation those have kept aloof who had equal pride, at least equal talents, and not unequal passions, and nevertheless knew not in the course of their lives what it